

HOUSTON CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

THE PILLARS

EDUCATION
THAT'S **NOT**
BUSINESS
AS USUAL

SPRING 2026

A Message from the **President**

*Accreditation is more than a designation—
it is a declaration of purpose.*

The recent accreditation of the Archie W. Dunham College of Business (DCOB) by the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP) confirms what we have always believed: that excellence in teaching, genuine care for students and faith-informed leadership are fundamental to higher education.

This achievement reflects years of thoughtful work by faculty, staff and administrators who were willing to evaluate themselves honestly, align their efforts with our mission and continually ask how we can better serve students and society. Accreditation provides external validation, but more importantly, it strengthens internal clarity.

The Archie W. Dunham College of Business prepares students not only for careers, but for lives of integrity, stewardship and service. This accreditation confirms that commitment—and challenges us to continue improving.

I am grateful for the leadership that guided this process and proud of what it represents for our students, alumni and broader community.

As you peruse this special business edition of *The Pillars*, I invite you to discover the stories highlighting the leadership team, faculty, programs and student-focused initiatives that played a vital role in securing the DCOB's official accreditation.

Robert B. Sloan

@DrRobertBSloan

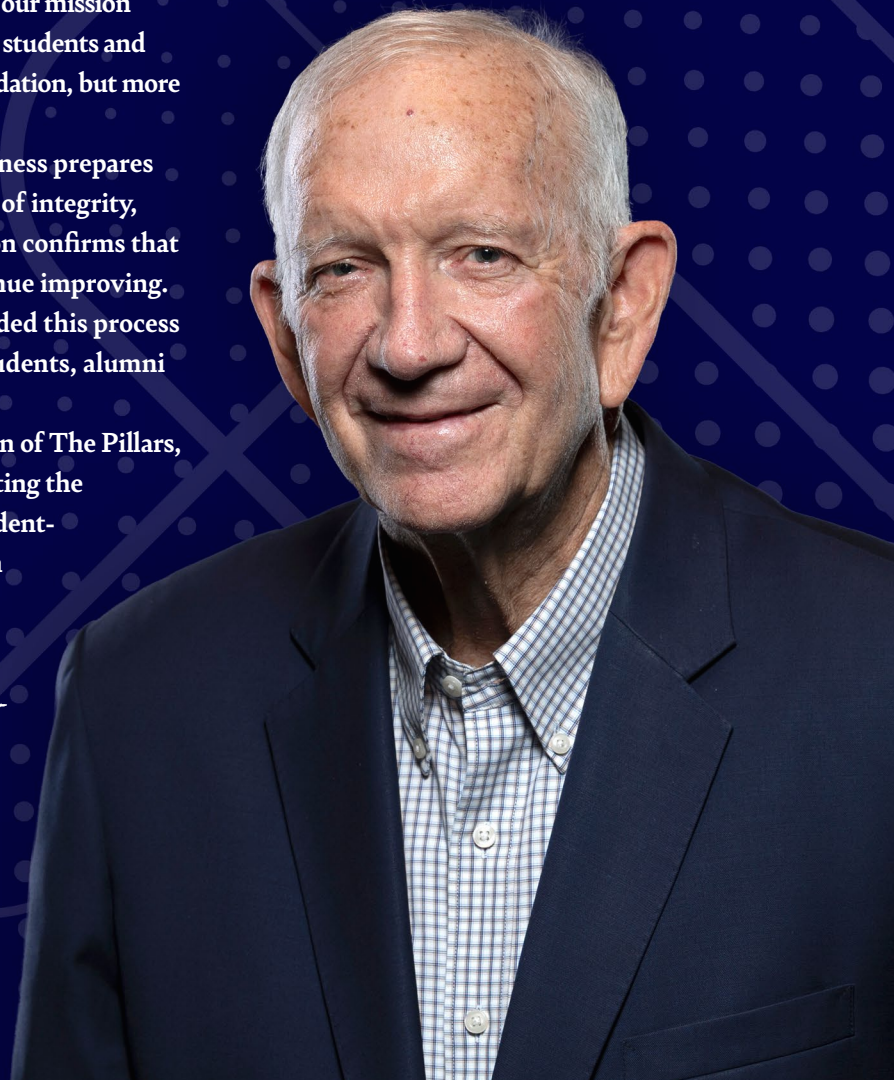


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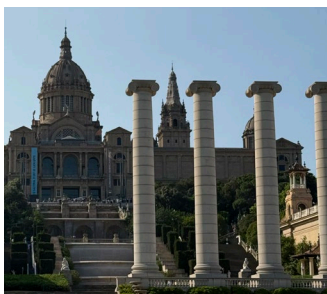
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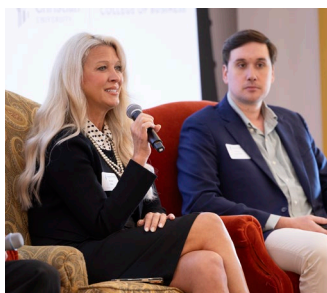
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Accreditation

ACHIEVED





A Mark of Excellence and a Charge

ARCHIE W. DUNHAM COLLEGE OF BUSINESS ACHIEVES ACCREDITATION

On Dec. 11, 2025, Houston Christian University (HCU) officials received news that marked both a milestone and a new beginning for the Archie W. Dunham College of Business (DCOB). After an extensive and rigorous three-year auditing process, the College officially earned accreditation from the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP).

For DCOB leadership and faculty, the recognition serves not as a finish line, but as a catalyst for continuous process improvement—affirming decades of disciplined progress, from its humble beginnings in 1966 as the Division of Business and Economics at what was then Houston Baptist College, to the start of a new decade of targeted improvement.

“This is not just a single stake in the sand,” says Dr. Gregory L. Keiffer, Executive Associate Dean of the DCOB. “ACBSP accreditation means we’ve committed ourselves to an ongoing process—listening to the marketplace, learning from employers and our advisory board and continually refining how we prepare students for meaningful careers.”

SIGNIFICANCE OF ACBSP ACCREDITATION

ACBSP accreditation affirms that a business school meets rigorous standards in leadership, strategic planning, curriculum quality, faculty development and—most importantly—student learning outcomes. For HCU, it also validates the Dunham College of Business’s identity as a teaching-focused, student-centered institution.

Dr. Kenneth Bandy, Professor of Business and Accreditation Liaison, described the DCOB’s recent accreditation as “a signal to the world that we have looked outside of ourselves to a set of standards that are, in practice, high quality markers.”

“Our goal was to achieve those standards and then share with the world and all of our stakeholders that we have met those quality requirements,” says Dr. Bandy.

ACBSP emphasizes teaching excellence and continuous improvement and enabled DCOB to remain true to its mission and student-centered focus.

“We’re a Christian university. Our calling is to prepare students not only for employment, but for service, leadership and stewardship,” says Dr. Keiffer.

The Archie W. Dunham College of Business is now the only ACBSP-accredited four-year business school in the greater Houston area.

A BUSINESS-MINDED PROCESS FOR A BUSINESS SCHOOL

The ACBSP accreditation journey is a multi-phase process that includes institutional eligibility and candidacy, completion of a comprehensive self-study, an on-site peer-review visit and review by the ACBSP Board of Commissioners, followed by ongoing reporting and continuous improvement.

The process mirrored what students are taught in Dunham classrooms: strategic thinking, accountability and disciplined execution.

“We approached this exactly like a business transformation,” says Dr. Keiffer.

Every program, every course and every learning outcome came under review. Faculty analyzed assessment data,

benchmarked against peer institutions and asked difficult questions about relevance and rigor.

For the 2024-2025 academic year, HCU business students outperformed competing institutions represented by their accreditation or faith affiliation on the end-of-program assessment exam. The exam, offered by Peregrine Global Services, measures students’ knowledge of core business areas and demonstrates the quality of academic programs.

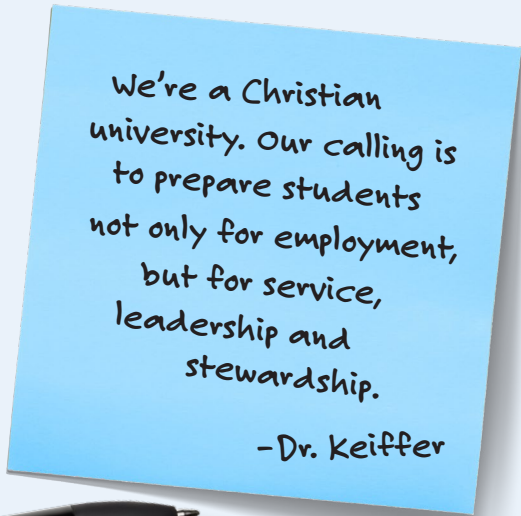
“We weren’t just checking boxes,” Dr. Bandy explains of the accreditation process. “We were asking: Does this actually prepare students for the marketplace?”

The result was a refined strategic plan that places student success at its core. Graduation rates, retention, experiential learning and career placement are no longer byproducts of the process; they are central benchmarks and performance indicators.

“This isn’t a one-time achievement,” Dr. Keiffer emphasizes. “It’s more of an ongoing process to make sure we don’t rest on our laurels and that we make sure that all of the great processes that we put in place are being improved continuously.”

FACULTY AT THE CENTER OF CHANGE

Achieving accreditation rested squarely on faculty leadership. Monthly meetings evolved into innovation sessions where professors examined curriculum at the syllabus level and collaborated across disciplines—from



accounting and finance to marketing, management and international business.

“Faculty creativity is one of our greatest strengths,” says Dr. Bandy. “We’re constantly finding ways to bring real-world experiences into the classroom—competitions, certifications, case studies and applied projects.”

During the process, faculty built professional certifications in banking, commercial real estate, leadership and professional development; invited alumni to campus to engage with students; and refined student organizations, including student service clubs, accounting and finance organizations and human resource management clubs.

The accreditation process also sharpened the college’s approach to faith integration. Rather than remaining an abstract value, faith integration became what leaders now call a mission imperative.

“We’ve created a subcommittee focused specifically on faith integration,” explains Dr. Bandy. “Its purpose is to support every faculty member in doing their very best work in that area—and to measure it meaningfully.”

RECOMMENDED ENHANCEMENTS

One of the most transformative aspects of the ACBSP process was what it revealed, both in strengths and weaknesses.

“ACBSP provides a framework for what colleges of business should be teaching. And through that process, we identified a couple of areas where we were not as strong as we should be,” Dr. Keiffer expounds.

First, business communications. Testing and evaluations revealed that while students were capable, they needed stronger preparation in professional communication—from writing effective emails and reports to presenting in boardrooms and engaging confidently with executives.

“This isn’t just a business communications course,” Dr. Keiffer explains. “It’s about learning how to be a business professional.”

Second, financial literacy and generosity. In alignment with HCU’s Christian mission, the college is developing a dedicated course that will be a prerequisite for every business major, focused on financial stewardship, generosity and ethical decision-making. (See page 22.)

“ACBSP directly influenced that addition,” Dr. Keiffer notes. “Yes, we needed to meet accreditation standards—but the deeper benefit is how it serves students, the community and the marketplace.”

Both courses will launch in Fall 2026, alongside revised undergraduate and graduate degrees shaped by employer feedback and regional workforce needs.



ACBSP
GLOBAL BUSINESS
ACCREDITATION

**STANDARDS
AND CRITERIA**

for Demonstrating Excellence in
Business Degree Programs



At its heart,
ACCREDITATION
is about
STUDENTS.

STUDENTS, CAREERS AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

At its heart, accreditation is about students. As part of the ACBSP framework, the DCOB now tracks and prioritizes outcomes that matter most: retention, graduation, internships and job placement.

“The ultimate measure is employment,” Dr. Keiffer says. “How many offers students receive—and how well those roles align with their goals.”

Accreditation also enhances the value of degrees already earned.

“As the student experience improves, the value of our alumni degrees increases,” Dr. Keiffer explains. “That’s a benefit that reaches far beyond campus.”

For employers, the message is clear: graduates of the Archie W. Dunham College of Business are being trained with intention—grounded in skill, character and faith.

LOOKING AHEAD

As the college celebrates its ACBSP accreditation, leaders are quick to shift the focus forward.

“We’re accredited,” Dr. Bandy says. “Now we focus on continuing to improve.”

It’s a promise—to students, to employers and to the Houston community—that the Archie W. Dunham College of Business will continue listening, learning and leading with purpose.

For a full overview of retention and performance data for various degree programs, visit [HC.edu/business/accreditation](https://www.hc.edu/business/accreditation).

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About the ACBSP

Founded in 1988, the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP) is a leading global accreditor and the first to offer accreditation across all levels of business education, from associate to doctoral programs. Its rigorous, outcomes-based standards—modeled on the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award—require comprehensive assessment, continuous improvement and close alignment with employer expectations, signifying that an accredited business school meets internationally recognized benchmarks for educational excellence and workforce relevance.

For the Archie W. Dunham College of Business, earning accreditation reflects significant institutional advancement, including strengthened advisory board engagement with industry leaders, the addition of new faculty, revised strategic planning responsive to marketplace realities, expanded student support and certificate programs, revitalized student organizations and faculty development grounded in ACBSP assessment and continuous improvement practices.



Scan the QR code to learn more.



New Faculty

Fresh Perspectives and Vision

The Archie W. Dunham College of Business at Houston Christian University (HCU) has welcomed a dynamic group of new faculty members who are fostering innovation and exploration in the classroom. From leveraging AI and social media marketing to studying international enterprise and People Analytics, these educators are preparing business students to enter corporate and entrepreneurial arenas equipped with cutting-edge skills—all grounded in a Christ-centered foundation.



1 **Dr. April Kinchen** ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Dr. April Kinchen serves as Program Director for HCU's Master of Human Resource Management (MSHRM) and People Analytics programs, teaching leadership, organizational behavior, compensation, training, HR systems and People Analytics across undergraduate and graduate levels. Drawing on extensive professional experience, she integrates real-world insights with academic rigor.

Attracted to HCU for its commitment to faith-integrated scholarship, Dr. Kinchen earned her doctorate in Business Administration from Liberty University and values teaching in an environment where academic excellence and spiritual formation intersect. She also serves as Faculty Advisor for HCU's Society of Human Resources Management (SHRM) Student Chapter, which earned the SHRM Chapter Merit Award in its inaugural year.

2 **Dr. Antoinette Okono** ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF MARKETING

Dr. Antoinette Okono coordinates HCU's Bachelor of Business Administration in Marketing program and teaches courses including Principles of Marketing, Consumer Behavior, Social Media Marketing, Marketing Strategy and Marketing Research. She emphasizes experiential, market-driven learning, integrating faith and service into her teaching.

Her research focuses on consumer-brand relationships, symbolic interactionism and relational exchange, with work presented at national conferences. Dr. Okono contributes as a conference track chair, journal reviewer and advisory member for HCU's Women in Leadership Program, while leading curriculum development and accreditation alignment to advance innovative, student-centered marketing education.

3 **Dr. Pauline Akatsa-Hinga** ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

Dr. Pauline Akatsa-Hinga is Program Director for HCU's Master of International Business (MIB) and teaches International Business, Management and Global Enterprise, while leading the annual graduate cultural immersion experience abroad. Drawn to HCU for its faith-based mission, she mentors students, collaborates on curriculum development and engages actively beyond the classroom. Her research explores barriers Indigenous peoples face in accessing organizations, emphasizing culturally informed approaches to inclusion and empowerment.

4 **Dr. Richard Kniffen** ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF BUSINESS DATA ANALYTICS

Dr. Richard Kniffen teaches analytics and management information systems and manages HCU's minor in Business Analytics and MBA in Business Analytics programs. He focuses on aligning programs with evolving employer needs and is particularly interested in AI's impact on business and education, as well as social media's societal effects.

A first-generation college graduate who went on to earn a PhD in Management Information Systems, Dr. Kniffen was drawn to HCU's Christ-centered mission and believes in the transformative power of education grounded in Christian values.


5 **Dr. Chen Zhao** ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF ACCOUNTING

Dr. Chen Zhao coordinates HCU's Accounting BBA program and advises the Accounting and Finance Society. She teaches courses in Intermediate Accounting, Accounting Systems, Internal Control, Corporate Taxation, and Accounting Research and Communication, while establishing a student chapter of the Association for Certified Fraud Examiners.

Attracted to HCU for its focus on servant leadership and faith-based education, Dr. Zhao integrates ethics and academic excellence into her teaching as she mentors students, fosters inclusive learning and contributes to campus initiatives. Her research examines fraud probability, firm life cycle stages and CEO ethics, providing insights that bridge scholarship and practice.

6 **Dr. Timothy White** ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF LEADERSHIP

Colonel Tim White, PhD, USAF (retired), coordinates HCU's MS Leadership program and developed the BUSA 6350 Governmental and Public Sector Leadership course. He brings extensive experience in leadership, strategy and public service, including service as an Air Force officer and combat pilot, and teaching roles at Air University and the Naval War College.

Drawn to HCU for its Christ-centered mission, Dr. White emphasizes leadership as a values-driven practice rooted in biblical truth, service and responsibility. His work equips students to lead with integrity and understand the lasting impact of their decisions on organizations, communities and their faith. 



Passport to Global Business

Last summer, a group of MBA students from HCU embarked on a 10-day International Immersion Experience that took them to Spain and Portugal.

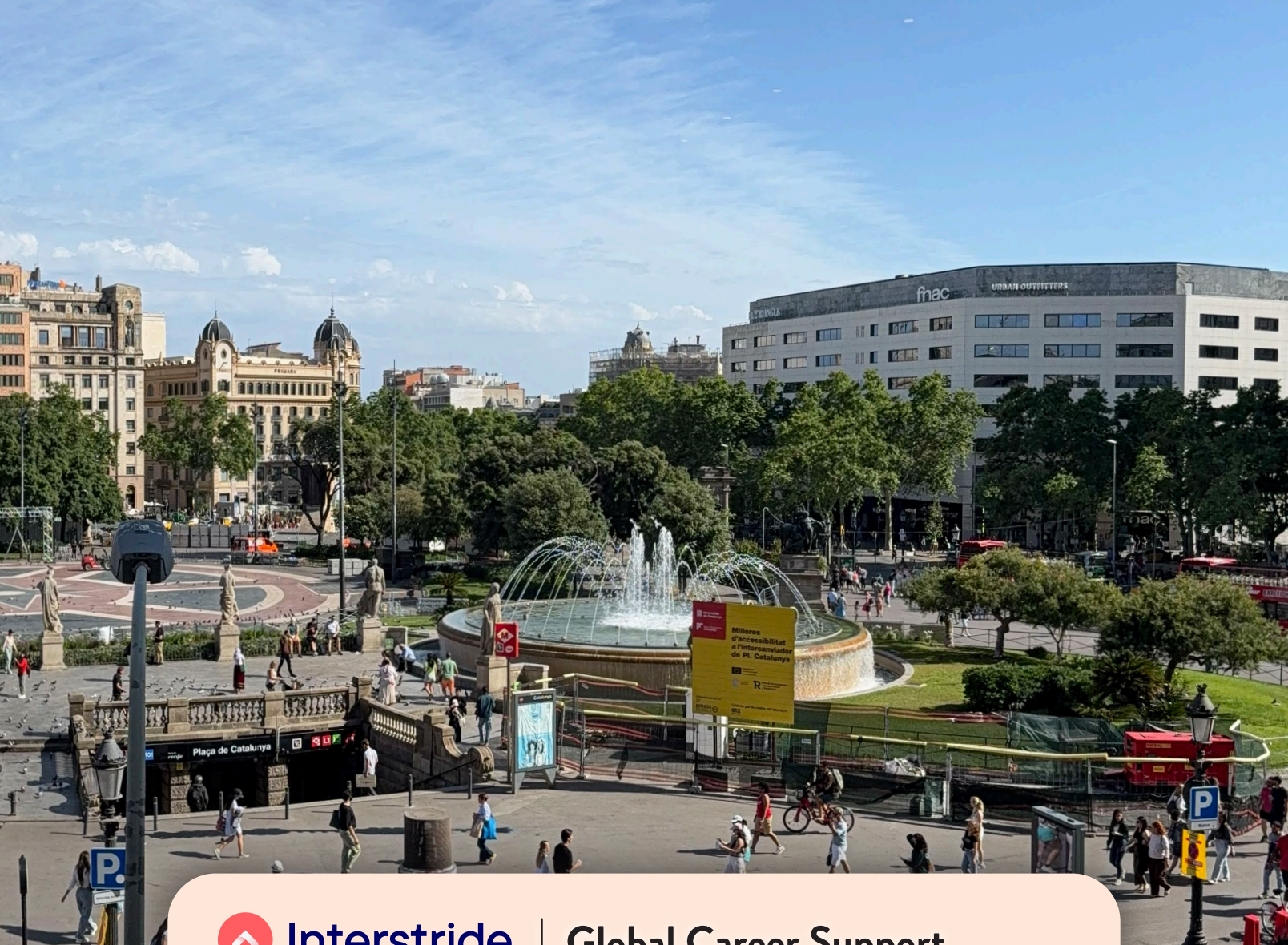
This experience was designed to give students an in-person look at how European countries are navigating growth, innovation and global strategy.

In Barcelona, students experienced firsthand how organic grocery chain Veritas is promoting sustainability and blazing new trails in marketing. They also were able to meet executives at the Barça Innovation Hub and learn how FC Barcelona, one of the world's most popular and

decorated sports franchises, applies research, analytics and technology to push the boundaries on player performance and fan engagement.

Upon arrival in Lisbon, Portugal, they met with executives from Aldi Portugal, Siemens Portugal and representatives from the Port of Lisbon.

It wasn't all business, though: these students got a chance to visit historically and culturally significant monuments like La Sagrada Família, Montjuic Castle, São Jorge Castle and the Belem Tower in Lisbon. They also took in a Flamenco show, a Spanish cooking class and historic walking tours in both Barcelona and Lisbon.

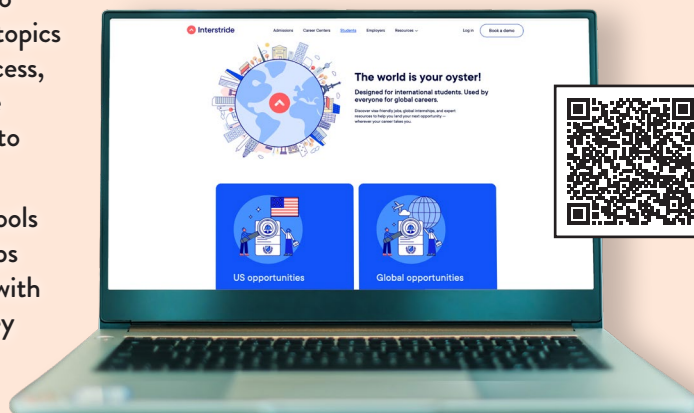


Interstride | Global Career Support

Houston Christian University (HCU) has officially partnered with Interstride, an interactive career portal designed to help international students navigate the complexities of the global job search from the very start of their college careers. This collaboration reflects a shared commitment by the Archie W. Dunham College of Business, the Office of International Student Services and Career & Calling to support the professional development of HCU's international student community.

Through this career portal, international students gain access to powerful resources, including real-time visa and immigration insights, financial aid guidance and a specialized job board tailored to global employment opportunities. The platform also offers regular webinars on key topics such as the job application process, along with access to Interstride ambassadors who are available to answer student questions.

With these comprehensive tools and resources, Interstride equips HCU's international students with the knowledge and support they need to pursue successful careers in the U.S. and around the world.



interstride.com

“Culture is essential in global enterprises,” said Dr. Pauline Akatsa-Hinga, Assistant Professor of International Business, “and understanding its impact on business is a key learning outcome of the graduate courses.”

This trip is central to the ethos of the recently re-launched Master of International Business degree program: moving beyond theory and getting students’ hands immersed in the real work of engaging and navigating the complex, ever-changing world of international business. 🏰



Above – Dr. Akatsa-Hinga and a student take a photo with a lively Flamenco troupe outside Barcelona’s City Hall.

Top right – Students captivated as an Aldi executive in Lisbon shares insights on the company’s history and success, with Lisbon’s stunning scenery in the background.

Bottom right – Students work together in groups to research and prepare presentations for a Veritas strategy challenge in Barcelona.



New Master's Degree Programs

LAUNCHED IN 2025

MASTER OF INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS (MIB)

The recently re-launched Master in International Business (MIB) prepares students to manage global organizations and value chains. This program goes beyond the classroom, featuring an exciting international cultural immersion trip where students gain firsthand experience and forge connections with some of the world's most exciting corporations. Built for an international world and rooted in Houston, the MIB will produce executives who lead global organizations with integrity, skill and wisdom.

PROFESSIONAL MBA IN ACCOUNTING AND FINANCE (PMBA)

Our new professional MBA in Accounting and Finance is designed to take graduate students to the next stage of their careers in financial leadership. Crafted specifically for working professionals, students will learn key academic theories and gain invaluable practical experience for today's complex financial landscape.

PROFESSIONAL MBA IN BUSINESS DATA ANALYTICS (PMBA)

Looking to take the next step in the evolving digital world of business? The PMBA in Business Data Analytics is designed to help students get there. Combining foundational business expertise with advanced analytical tools, this exciting new program will prepare students to drive organizational success through data-driven decision making.

PROFESSIONAL MBA IN MANAGEMENT (PMBA)

The PMBA in Management represents HCU's commitment to training the next generation of transformational business leaders. This program is highly flexible, allowing graduate students to adjust the balance between in-person and online courses to suit their schedule and needs. With a focus on essential business skills, strategic acumen and ethical considerations, this program is committed to preparing students for executive leadership in today's dynamic marketplace.

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT – PEOPLE ANALYTICS (MSHRM – PA)

Our new Master of Science in Human Resources – People Analytics fuses traditional human resources expertise with cutting-edge analytic capabilities. This is a STEM-designated program, committed to developing HR leaders who command advanced data science skills in order to lead their organizations with precision, human insight and ethical clarity.



INSIDE INDUSTRY



DISCOVERING THE DRIVING FORCE OF BUSINESS

The Archie W. Dunham College of Business (DCOB) administrators and faculty bring learning to life by coordinating site visits to employers from diverse industries, connecting students directly with industry leaders through immersive experiences that provide an inside look at workplace culture, career pathways and the professional skills needed to thrive in today's business environment.

Supported by corporate sponsors including Microsoft, Mansfield Service Partners, Enterprise Mobility and Forvis Mazars, these visits reinforce classroom concepts by allowing students to see theory applied in practice while building professional awareness and confidence.

BECOME A DCOB CORPORATE PARTNER

Find out how your company can help shape the next generation of business professionals from HCU.





MICROSOFT

Students gained insight into Microsoft's approach to innovation and leadership, while engaging with professionals who shared perspectives on career pathways and the evolving demands of the tech industry.

"We enjoyed learning about hiring areas, company culture and professional development opportunities from a knowledgeable group of panelists," said Yvette Garcia, an HCU alumna and Graduate Advising and Placement Coordinator.


FORVIS MAZARS

Forvis Mazars offered students an inside look at the world of professional services, spanning accounting, advisory and consulting. Through meaningful conversations with firm professionals, students explored internship and full-time career opportunities while gaining insight into the firm's collaborative culture and client-focused approach. The experience underscored the firm's strong commitment to mentorship and continuous learning as key drivers of long-term professional success.

CADENCE BANK/ HUNTINGTON BANK

Cadence Bank, now part of Huntington National Bank, helps prepare students for careers in banking through our Banking Certificate and Leadership Development Program, launched in 2023. Huntington supports this university-led program by helping create career pathways, including recruitment opportunities.

MANSFIELD SERVICE PARTNERS

The learning continued at Mansfield Service Partners, a facilities and infrastructure services company, where students engaged with a dynamic group of professionals who shared real-world insights into operations, leadership and career growth. Business students also toured the facility and had the opportunity to ask questions and network with a panel of professionals to help them envision future career roles. 



IS NOW PART OF



WHY THESE VISITS MATTER

Through these immersive site visits, students stepped into real-world business environments and gained more than just exposure—they built confidence, expanded professional networks and connected classroom concepts to practical application. These visits would not be possible without the generosity and commitment of corporate partners, whose investment in HCU students helps shape the next generation of business leaders.

ADVISORY BOARD SPOTLIGHT



For Nayla Benyamine, Houston Christian University (HCU) did more than prepare her for success in the business world—it strengthened her faith and shaped the values that now bring her back to make an impact where her journey began.

NAYLA BENYAMINE

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BANK OF TEXAS

Coming Full Circle

A 2007 graduate of the Archie W. Dunham College of Business (DCOB), Nayla earned a double major in Business Administration and Marketing when the University was still known as Houston Baptist University. As a student, she gained more than a business education. She found a community that challenged her, shaped her values and planted a vision for leadership grounded in service.

“Having been a student there, I’m deeply motivated to help make the college even better. My time at HCU was transformative, not just in terms of education but also in forming lifelong friendships and connections that I still hold dear,” shared Benyamine.

After graduation, Nayla joined a Houston-based medical missions nonprofit, where she discovered a passion for healthcare administration and purpose-driven work. The experience set her on a path toward a Master of Public Health in Healthcare Management from The University of Texas School of Public Health—and eventually to Baylor College of Medicine.

At Baylor, Nayla stepped into one of the most formative seasons of her professional life. Serving in the President’s Office during a time of significant institutional change, she helped advance strategic planning initiatives and cross-campus collaboration. Working closely with executive leadership, she witnessed firsthand how thoughtful, servant-minded leadership can guide organizations through complexity while honoring the people who make the mission possible. Those lessons stayed with her, shaping how she leads today. Eventually, that path led her back to where it all began.

Now Chair of the DCOB Advisory Board, she brings her experience, perspective and passion home to HCU. In this role, she helps guide the College’s strategic direction while building meaningful bridges between students, faculty and industry leaders.

“At HCU, I put this into practice by intentionally creating opportunities for board members to participate in the College of Business, engaging them in discussions where their industry experience can directly benefit the DCOB and meeting with them one on one to

better understand their perspectives and connect their strengths to the needs of the college,” shares Benyamine.

From career panels and mock interviews to internships, site visits and signature events like the Commercial Real Estate Forum, Nayla and the Advisory Board work intentionally to connect classroom learning with real-world experience. The goal is simple but powerful: to ensure students graduate confident, prepared and ready to lead.

Benyamine’s leadership was especially impactful during the College’s recent Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP) accreditation, a milestone she views not as a finish line, but as a promise.

“Accreditation really opens doors on multiple levels. For students, it means they’re part of a program that’s recognized for its excellence, which can attract top employers who are eager to recruit from a well-accredited school. For external partnerships, it makes the college a more attractive collaborator, whether that’s forming alliances with other universities or partnering with industries,” says Benyamine.

DCOB’s recent accreditation signals that the College is a place where continuous improvement and high standards are the norm, paving the way for even more opportunities.

Looking ahead, she believes that the DCOB is poised for an exciting future. With strong leadership, engaged faculty and an increasingly involved Advisory Board, the Dunham College of Business is positioned to expand its influence and deepen its impact.

She views her role as Advisory Board Chair as a calling shaped by gratitude and purpose. “HCU invested in me at a formative time in my life,” she reflects. “Now, it’s a privilege to invest back, to help open doors and to be part of the story that’s still being written.”

What makes Benyamine’s role even more meaningful is witnessing the remarkable progress DCOB Dean Mike Rome and his team have made since her graduation. Their commitment and achievements continue to inspire her, and she feels honored to give back, offer her perspective and learn alongside the distinguished members of the advisory board.

“Together, we’re helping shape the future of the college in a deeply rewarding way.”

FROM CLASSROOM TO CLOSING

INSIDE THE
WORLD OF
COMMERCIAL
REAL ESTATE

For Archie W. Dunham College of Business (DCOB) students looking to move beyond theory, the Commercial Real Estate (CRE) Forum offers something rare: an insider's view of a fast-moving industry and direct access to the professionals shaping it.

The innovative forum was founded by Stewart Morris, Jr., president of Stewart Security Capital, a family-owned company that invests across multiple commercial real estate sectors. Morris said the idea grew from the extensive research required to make informed investment decisions.

"Markets evolve," Morris said. "We invested valuable time measuring and trying to understand the current CRE market in order to make investment decisions and

decided it would be good to share that due diligence and research exercise."

The 2025 forum was sponsored by Stewart Security Capital, Texas Traditions Bank and U.S. Capital Wealth Advisors. Now in its fourth year, the event brings investors, developers, lenders and students together for a candid discussion of current market conditions, economic trends and where opportunity may lie next.

Moderated by Stewart Morris III, Vice President of Finance & Investments at Stewart Security Capital and a member of HCU's Dunham College of Business Advisory Board, the panel included leaders from Hines, LSCRE, McCord Development, Pender Capital and Fidelis.

HCU provided the ideal setting. By hosting the event in Independence Hall in the Morris Family Center for Law & Liberty, the forum intentionally placed students



Industry Insights: (l-r) Guest panelists John Flournoy, Peter Sanborn, Sam Morris, Kristin Rick and Kevin Hassenflu, led by moderator Stewart Morris III, share their expertise, insights and innovative ideas at the 2025 Commercial Real Estate Forum held at HCU last fall.

in the center of professional dialogue, bridging the gap between classroom learning and real-world practice.

WHERE LEARNING MEETS INDUSTRY

Morris Jr. saw the forum as an opportunity to expose students to expert perspectives rarely found in textbooks.

“Bringing together the CRE community on campus opened the door to exposing students and the CRE community to experts sharing their views of the current state of the market and their vision for the next year,” he said.

As attendance has grown, so has the scope of the forum. Panels now represent a broad range of CRE sectors and include economic outlook discussions that underscore how closely investment performance is tied to the broader economy.

The partnership of the Commercial Real Estate forum with the Morris family has been an incredible educational entrée for our students to attain job opportunities that they didn't know were available to them.

MIKE ROME

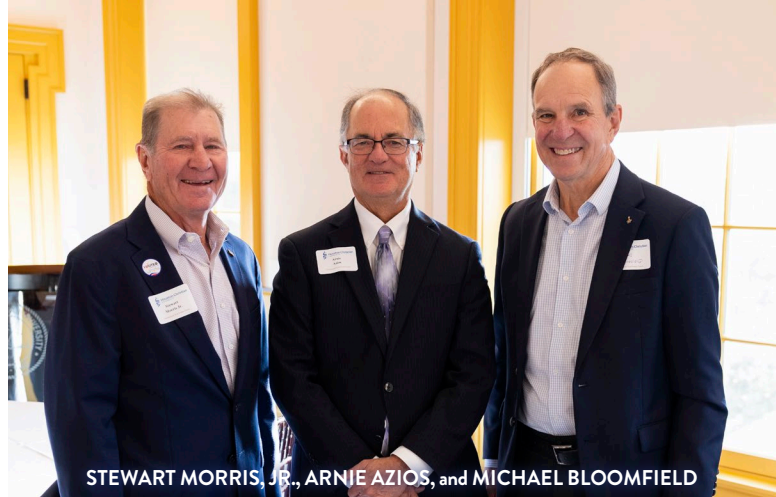
*Dean of the Archie W. Dunham
College of Business*

“We have broadened the panel of experts to cover more of the CRE sectors and added economic outlook because the economy very much affects investment performance,” shared Morris III.

The guiding principles of informed and engaged speakers, meaningful networking at the start and close of the event and intentional exposure all work in tandem to provide an environment that introduces students to commercial real estate and the CRE community to HCU.

A FRONT-ROW SEAT FOR STUDENTS

For students, the value is immediate. They hear how professionals analyze risk, identify opportunity and navigate uncertainty, while also making personal connections with industry leaders.



STEWART MORRIS, JR., ARNIE AZIOS, and MICHAEL BLOOMFIELD

At the most recent forum, student participation reached a new level.

“There were more students there, and they asked questions,” Morris Jr. said. “They actually asked the first question.”

That engagement reflects the forum's growing role as a gateway into the industry. Commercial real estate firms are actively seeking fresh perspectives, and the forum creates a space for those conversations to begin.

“HCU business school students have an opportunity to learn about current market conditions and meet active players,” Morris III reiterated. “And the industry needs fresh, active young minds.”

LOOKING AHEAD

While professional relationships continue to grow from the forum, its most lasting impact may be on the students themselves, noted Mike Rome, Dean of DCOB.

“The partnership of the Commercial Real Estate Forum with the Morris family has been an incredible educational entrée for our students to attain job opportunities that they didn't know were available to them,” said Rome.

“The Forum displays many areas of the real estate world that exist and the developmental skills needed to make CRE a career. Subsequently, the development of the CRE certificate program, in partnership with the Risk Management Association, has been especially beneficial and rewarding for DCOB graduating students.”

By bringing the industry to campus, the HCU Commercial Real Estate Forum offers more than insight. It offers access, perspective and the opportunity for students to step directly into the conversation shaping the environment around them. 🏢

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



WYATT HENRY

When Wyatt Henry first arrived at Houston Christian University (HCU) in 2020, his trajectory seemed clear: international business degree, law school, corporate ladder, corner office. Fast forward to today, and you'll find him in rural northwest Ohio, splitting his time between running an intensive entrepreneurship program and traveling to 31 states a year for one of the country's fastest-growing billboard companies.

From Atwood to Atlas

It's not the path he expected. But it's exactly where he's supposed to be.

A homeschooled kid from Houston, Wyatt describes his younger self as independent, analytical and curious about the world beyond his immediate surroundings. Those traits led him to HCU's Honors College, where the promise of "small class sizes, rigorous core coursework and meaningful mentorship" aligned perfectly with what he was seeking.

As a commuter who worked all four years, Wyatt's campus experience was grounded in the essentials: classes, coffee with professors, study sessions with friends in Atwood I or soaking in the Houston weather in front of Hinton Center.

"I really appreciated the pace and scale of the campus," he reflects. "It was small enough to foster genuine relationships and constant familiarity, yet large enough that I was always running into people."

That balance became the backdrop for transformative education. Wyatt lights up when discussing some of his favorite courses, Honors College Socratic Seminars, Managing the Global Enterprise, Power and Negotiation and the Legal Environment of Business.

"Each of them challenged the way I thought and pushed me to engage deeply with complex ideas," shared Wyatt.

But beyond courses, the HCU alum credits Dunham College of Business and a long list of faculty members, including Dr. Ewest, Dr. Keiffer, Dr. Brooks and Dean Rome, for defining his HCU experience.

"Their investment in students and commitment to teaching are what made my time at HCU so meaningful."

Wyatt graduated from HCU with a BBA in International Business in 2024.

Today, he serves as Chief of Staff at Atlas Institute, an entrepreneurship and executive leadership training program. Through the program, residents participate in intensive reading and writing, travel across the country, meet business owners, shadow executive leadership and pitch new business ideas on a weekly basis.

"What excites me most is the opportunity to help develop the next generation of Christian business leaders," Wyatt shares.

The HCU alum handles everything from recruiting residents to curriculum planning to fundraising—classic generalist work that suits him perfectly.

Simultaneously, he's the Administrative Manager at Huntington Billboards, a role that keeps him perpetually in motion. Last year, he spent 119 days on the road, traveling with the executive team and assisting with acquisition due diligence.

"It has been an incredible opportunity early in my career, and I'm deeply grateful for the trust and responsibility I've been given."

Instead of the conventional route, he opted for something far less structured and more ambiguous early on, a decision that required risk, adaptability and a willingness to learn quickly, but has proven incredibly rewarding.

"I always knew I would pursue work that demanded significant effort and responsibility," he admits. "What I didn't expect was how that work would take shape."

In addition to the Dunham College of Business, Wyatt credits The Honors College, Dr. Gary Hartenburg and Dr. Chris Hammons for preparing him for this unconventional journey.

"The literature, mentorship and friendships fundamentally influenced how I think and approach the world. Their generosity with time, wisdom and honest guidance helped me learn how to think carefully through decisions and long-term trajectories, a skill I continue to rely on."

For someone juggling two high-intensity roles, Wyatt's definition of success is to faithfully follow the will of the Lord, a metric that hasn't changed since his student days and shows no signs of shifting.

"Success is less about external markers and more about finishing the race in front of me with faithfulness and integrity." 🙏



DEVELOPING Financial

The Archie W. Dunham College of Business (DCOB) will launch a new course named Financial Literacy and Generosity (FLAG) in the Fall 2026 semester to equip business students with the knowledge and principles to be financial stewards in both the marketplace and the kingdom.

“Financial literacy and generosity is foundational for students because it prepares them to manage, budget and invest, while at the same time we are fostering ethical, prosocial habits early in life. The DCOB is a perfect place for the students to learn these habits which will in turn reduce high stress, debt driven and poor financial decisions in the future. I see it as our responsibility to educate students in this area knowing, for most, the first time they have to manage their finances will be after they graduate. Also, I think of it as part of their college education that prepares them for the real world,” shared Michael Rome, Dean of the DCOB and Director of Academic and Corporate Partnerships.

“As we thought about the foundational way to go about teaching students Financial Literacy and Generosity, it seemed like a natural fit for HCU to team up with Blue Trust, a financial advisory services company that brings almost five decades of biblical wealth management experience,” he said. “It is great to work with Blue Trust and others on this mission.”

With nearly \$60 billion in assets under advisement and a nationwide network of 19 offices, Blue Trust advisors apply biblical wisdom and technical expertise to help their nearly 11,000 clients across the wealth spectrum in all 50 states.

“Christian universities have a unique role in our country, as they train the next generation to see the world through a biblical lens. One of the most important arenas that a Christian university can impact the kingdom is relative to the topic of money,” said Randy Schroeder, Sr., Private Wealth Advisor at Blue Trust.

Blue Trust has developed a Certified Financial Planner and Certified Kingdom Advisor combination program that is currently being offered in over 10 Christian universities in the country. The partnership with HCU will make it the first university in Texas to incorporate components of each of these programs in its new Financial Literacy and Generosity course.

“The college recognized that our students arrive to HCU from a wide variety of backgrounds and educational experiences. The main desired outcome of this course is for the students to be empowered. This is through the confluence of macroeconomic, technical and behavioral aspects of financial literacy and generosity,” said Dr. Gregory Keiffer, Executive Associate Dean of the DCOB.

All incoming freshman business school students will be required to take the FLAG course for graduation. The structure of the course and areas of study are being developed in collaboration with Blue Trust.

THE BIBLE AND THE ROLE OF MONEY

What is the role of money in our lives as believers and business professionals? There are approximately two thousand verses about money in the Bible. Clearly, God has something to say about our finances. In 1 Timothy 6:17, Paul



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



EUNICE MARTINEZ

While most student chapters spend years working toward national recognition, Eunice Martinez and her fellow officers, members of the Society for Human Resource Management Student Chapter (SHRM) at Houston Christian University (HCU) earned it in just one. The prestigious SHRM Merit Award became theirs in their inaugural year, marking an achievement so exceptional that it reverberated across the national HR community.

Leading with Heart

Eunice Martinez Elevates HCU's SHRM Chapter

"It is especially rare for a chapter to earn the Merit Award in its first year, and even more uncommon for a smaller school to achieve it at all," Eunice shares.

But make no mistake: this wasn't luck. This was vision, grit and a relentless commitment to excellence meeting at the intersection of faith and professionalism.

For Eunice, who is now pursuing her Master of Science in Human Resource Management while working as an administrative assistant in Student Affairs, stepping into the chapter's Vice President role wasn't about titles. It was about transformation. After proving herself as Secretary during the chapter's founding term, she was elected Vice President in April of 2025, a testament to the trust she'd already earned through her dedication to building something meaningful.

The SHRM Merit Award recognizes chapters demonstrating outstanding leadership, innovative programming, exceptional member engagement and flawless alignment with rigorous national standards. It's the gold standard of student chapter achievement. And HCU's chapter won it on their first attempt.

What made the difference? Eunice and her team refused to settle for ordinary. They transformed routine meetings into dynamic professional experiences where students didn't just attend, they experienced meaningful transformation.

"Students weren't simply showing up, they were engaging with one another, asking thoughtful questions, seeking guidance and taking steps to grow professionally," she recalls.

Beyond having Eunice as VP, the chapter's secret weapon was its intentional fusion of professional rigor and faith-centered values.

Drawing inspiration from Colossians 3:23, "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters," Eunice approached leadership as an act of service.

"This experience taught me that true leadership is about service, not position," she reflects. "It's about showing up consistently, listening actively and helping others succeed by creating opportunities for growth and development."

Of course, greatness rarely comes easy. Balancing demanding student schedules, officer responsibilities and the pressure of meeting national standards required strategic thinking and unwavering dedication. With invaluable mentorship from Dr. April Kinchen and a leadership culture built on transparency and collaboration, the team navigated every challenge with undeniable grace.


"When something didn't work, we adapted instead of giving up," Eunice says.

The result? A chapter where "leadership felt approachable rather than intimidating," a space where professional development and genuine community flourished in equal measure.

For Eunice, whose bilingual and bicultural background has enriched her philosophy of leadership and connection, the Merit Award validated something she already knew in her heart: she belongs in Human Resources.

Guided by Proverbs 16:3, "Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and he will establish your plans," she's building a career centered on serving others and creating workplaces where people thrive.

Her hope for future SHRM members is crystal clear: "I hope future members see the SHRM Student Chapter of HCU as more than just a resume booster. It is a place to grow, connect and lead with purpose."

The SHRM Merit Award now stands as shining proof of what's possible when students dare to dream big, lead with integrity and refuse to separate their faith from their professional pursuits. Under Eunice Martinez's leadership, HCU's SHRM chapter hasn't just succeeded, it has truly soared. 

**At HCU, he's
learning the shots
worth taking in
life aren't about
perfection; they're
the ones taken
from the angle of
purpose.**



In a world where Instagram filters can transform photos taken by a novice smartphone user to rival the quality once reserved for glossy-paged magazines, HCU student Jose Romero has achieved the rare feat of building a thriving professional photography business while pursuing a marketing degree.

A FUTURE IN FOCUS

“Since I was a little kid, photography, videography and video editing were always things that interested me,” Jose explains. “Growing up using social media further expanded that interest, especially upon seeing cool and innovative posts. My church’s media team pushed me and inspired me to find my creative voice and improve my techniques to be the best photographer I could be.”

What began as an expensive hobby is now offering a generous return on investment. “I love photography but as anyone who is heavily involved in it knows, it is very expensive. Lenses, camera bodies and all of the required equipment, after a while it adds up,” Jose shares. “An interesting fact is, I started doing photography as a business in my senior year of high school, but it only recently started taking off.”

In Jose’s short time at HCU, he has begun cultivating sharp business acumen in the Archie W. Dunham College of Business (DCOB) to ensure he is empowered to steward his calling and artistic ambitions with excellence. Where many in his field may graduate with questions about how to make a sustainable living through their God-given passion, he has received the community support and resources to master his craft on every level.

“My frequent interactions with professors in the DCOB, as well as their faith and business-oriented mentorship, have been of great blessing and contribution to my personal and professional development,” Jose

shares. “Dr. [Greggory] Keiffer has really contributed to my growth. He emphasized having a business mind and being strategic in all you do.”

While Jose specializes in event and portrait photography, he’s currently exploring a new creative avenue. “I’m starting to take up street photography as well,” he says. “I remember I was watching reels and I came across this talented photographer who would walk around the streets of his city and take photos and tell captivating stories with a couple of images. This then sparked that interest in me.”

As he continues to hone his skills in the industry, Jose’s path reminds us all that, in life and in business, we will have to overcome fears and navigate doubts. In those moments, the support of the HCU community helps Jose see his path forward through the lens of faith rather than discouragement.

“When I feel burnt out or insignificant, there is always someone, be it a professor or a friend, who reminds me that I am here because of the Lord. And because the Lord has put me here, He will be the One making all things possible. He is the center and before everything else, and from Him stems all creativity, joy and talent.”

As for Jose’s future, it appears to be as bright as the flash from his camera. He is zooming in on his niche and capturing defining moments through a business he fully intends to use for the glory of God. At HCU, he’s learning the shots worth taking in life aren’t about perfection; they’re the ones taken from the angle of purpose. 📷

More than **Resumes**

**HCU'S CAREER FAIR CLOTHES
STUDENTS IN CONFIDENCE
AND CALLING**





A DRIVE TO SUCCEED

The Archie W. Dunham College of Business 2025 Business and STEM Career Fair was a masterclass in how to create transformative opportunities anchored in divine purpose. Forty employers met with more than 400 ambitious students—and this historic success went beyond resume exchanges. Recruiters engaged with the next wave of Christ-led innovators while confirming a growing appetite among employers to hire Houston Christian University (HCU) graduates. Our profile continues to rise for producing ethical and proficient leaders.

Behind every handshake and polished interview was a reflection of our collective dedication to preparing students to enter their future professions with confidence. Yvette Garcia embodies this mission. The HCU alumna and graduate advising and placement coordinator, who once received interview attire from the clothing drive, now leads the University's partnership with the Dress for Success Houston program.

Her journey is a full-circle moment which embodies God's redemptive work and demonstrates how those who receive care at HCU often return to plant seeds in the same soil that nourished them.

Garcia highlighted the impact of the Dunham College of Business Career Closet, noting that what began last year through the vision and leadership of Emily Butler has quickly grown into an essential support for students across campus.

"Thanks to the generosity of our faculty, staff, alumni, Career and Calling team and board members, we've been able

to provide professional pieces at no cost to our students that help them stand out in a competitive market,” said Garcia.


“Beyond the fabric and the fit, these gifts instill the confidence needed to excel at career fairs and navigate job interviews. We are deeply grateful to our donors, Emily Butler and the College of Business team for making this possible; seeing the joy and readiness on our students’ faces makes every contribution worth it.”

The numbers from the most recent career fair, held this past fall, tell a story in themselves. 250 students were registered, yet over 380 students showed up to the event, marking a substantial increase from the spring 2025 fair of 178 attendees. The upward trend reflects not only effective promotion but also the growing recognition among students that HCU provides access to meaningful careers.

The job opportunities are expanding alongside Houston itself. The city continues to grow into an international hub celebrated for its diversity, young professionals and entrepreneurial spirit. HCU cultivates highly sought-after leaders through faith-based learning and career development initiatives. Employers increasingly recognize the necessity of recruiting graduates from a university where holistic formation eliminates the false choice between professional aptitude and personal integrity. The future belongs to those who embody both.

This truth drives our dedication to addressing the complete picture of professional development. As one of

Employers increasingly recognize the necessity of recruiting graduates from a university where holistic formation eliminates the false choice between professional aptitude and personal integrity. The future belongs to those who embody both.

the top five universities for referrals to Dress for Success Houston, alongside many of our strategic professional partnerships with employers throughout the city, we prepare graduates to be salt and light in their professions and communities. HCU continues to foster a dynamic learning environment where students walk in purpose, lead with wisdom—and clothe themselves in both professional excellence and garments of praise as they secure their dream jobs. 

CONNECT WITH TALENTED, CAREER-READY STUDENTS

Partner with HCU’s Career Fair to recruit, network and build your future workforce. Learn more or register your organization today!



Career Ready:
HCU students gathered at last fall’s Career Fair, coordinated by Emily Butler (top photo) and Yvette Garcia (bottom photo) to network with local companies, gain insights and take the next step toward their career goals.



Center for Christianity in Business

New Scholarships Shape Character and Careers

At Houston Christian University, the Center for Christianity in Business is shaping students to lead with faith and purpose. Through the Center's Scholars and Fellows scholarships, students receive multi-year support that combines tuition assistance, mentorship and professional development while connecting them with Christian leaders in the marketplace.

For freshman Yahaira Canales (*left*), an International Business major in the inaugural CCB Scholars cohort, the program transformed how she sees leadership. What began as a belief that faith guides ethical choices has grown into a vision of business as service to people created in God's image.

"Becoming a CCB Scholar has deepened my understanding that leadership is more about allowing faith to shape the kind of leader one becomes, one who leads with humility, wisdom and a commitment to serving both God and others through their work," shared Yahaira.


Her perspective sharpened during a mentoring conference where Christian executives spoke candidly about difficult decisions and real workplace pressures.

"Hearing Christian business leaders share their journeys and the difficult decisions they made to stay aligned with

God showed me how complex faith-based leadership can be in today's business world," said Yahaira.

Senior Ruth Ortega (*right*), a Business Administration major and CCB Fellow, experienced similar growth through mentorship with Diana Greenwood, president of Aspire Executive Coaching. Their conversations challenged Ruth to rethink success by putting faith first.

"The biggest insight I have gained from her is to have the Lord as my priority and to give Him the first of everything: my time, because He will lead my day; my earnings, because that takes greed away; and my gratitude, because thankfulness is key in life," shared Ruth.

Together, Yahaira and Ruth reflect the Center's mission: preparing students to steward their gifts, lead with integrity and carry their faith boldly into the marketplace. 

Huskies

MAKE HISTORY

Nick Whiting was announced as HCU's head coach of women's soccer in April of 2024 just before the end of school, with returning players gone for summer by the time he arrived on campus full-time. In his first season, he guided the Huskies to a 5-9-5 overall record with a 3-4-3 mark in SLC play. Heading into year two, he had 17 newcomers joining 16 returners for the 2025 campaign.

The Huskies started the season with the most non-conference wins in program history thanks to a 5-4 record before their SLC opener against Texas A&M-Corpus Christi. Once league play began, HCU saw up-and-down performances in playing to a 2-2-2 record through six SLC matches. After losing the next two and falling to 2-4-2, Whiting saw a last-minute game-winner against McNeese as an important spark.

"I think, against McNeese on Senior Day when we scored the late goal, that took some pressure off because then we knew we were making the (Southland) tournament," he said. "I think that sort of relaxed the team and let them just play. It was a weight off their shoulders."

HCU then closed out the regular season with a 2-0 road win over East Texas A&M





to earn the No. 5 seed in the conference tournament and an immediate rematch against No. 4 ETAMU. Freshman Paisley Barela scored her first two goals of the season to stake the Huskies to a 2-0 lead before Isabella Dillow scored and an own goal made it a 4-0 final. The Huskies then knocked off regular season champion Northwestern State in the semifinals with Barela netting her third goal in two games to win it in the 83rd minute.

That win set up a championship matchup against a Stephen F. Austin team that handed HCU a sound 2-0 defeat in Nacogdoches less than a month earlier. A tightly-contested contest ensued with the teams battling to a 0-0 tie game at the end of regulation, setting up a 10-minute overtime with a “Golden Goal” rule ending the match and giving the win to whichever team scored regardless of how much time was left on the clock.

The Huskies found the game-winning goal in the ninth minute of overtime with junior Olivia Rossman sealing the title with assists from Ella Remy and Dillow.

“There was a calmness from our group in that championship game,” said Whiting. “When we went out for the coin toss before overtime in the championship, I told our leaders to pick to attack the direction of our bench so when we score they can celebrate with their teammates. So, we got our side and I knew then that they were going to make it happen and rush each other to celebrate.”

With the SLC title in hand, the Huskies were sent to Baton Rouge, La. for the first round of the NCAA Tournament and a matchup against 25th-ranked LSU. HCU fell behind, 2-0, but Remy intercepted a pass in front of the LSU goal and blasted a shot past the keeper to cut the deficit in half and record the school’s first-ever goal in the NCAA Tournament as the Huskies eventually fell, 4-1.

HCU finished the year 12-9-2 for the highest single-season win total in program history. 🏆

1960

James Walding '67 retired after working as a Manager/Direct Marketing Consultant at Disabled American Veterans.

Billy O. Hardin '68 officially retired from teaching.

1970

Leigh Bishop '75 retired at the end of 2024 after practicing and teaching medicine. In the final years of his career, he focused exclusively on the treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in combat veterans. He served as a Navy Reserve physician in Afghanistan in 2008-09. He now lives with his wife in Waco, Texas.

Kendal Fries Barrier '79 is a retired Theatre Director for Hurst-Eules-Bedford ISD.

1980

Nancy Choate Brownlee '80 presented her quality improvement project, "Targeted Antibiotic Prophylaxis Before Prostate Biopsy," at three professional meetings and on a podcast this year. The three conferences included the National NP Symposium in Keystone, CO, the Texas NP meeting in Dallas and the Society of Urologic Nurses (SUNA) in Louisville, KY. The podcast was with SUNA in August. Additionally, she was a reviewer for the Core Curriculum for Urologic Nurses, 2nd edition, and attended the HCU Author Celebration held in October.

April Prichard Barbier '82, MS '84 started a new position as Sr. Account Executive at Jack Henry & Associates.

David Stutts '82 has been named the new President & CEO of the Oldham Little Church Foundation. Previously, he served as Vice President and CFO for the Star of Hope Mission.



Sherri Ann Schroeder '83 is now working as a RN III Primary Charge Nurse at Houston Methodist Hospital.

Kenneth Bartholomew '85 has moved into Senior Adult ministry after serving as a Minister of Music for 22 years at FBC Durant, Oklahoma, and is continuing his role as a Church Administrator. In 2024, he received his certification as a Church Administrator (C.C.A.) from The Church Network, formerly known as the National Association of Church Business Administrators.



Carrie Miner Smith '87 is a Program Specialist at Region 5 Education Service Center.

Lourie Lourdes Moore '87 DNP, MBA, RN, NEA-BC, CPHQ, LSSGB, FNAP was inducted as a Distinguished Fellow into the National Academies of Practice for Nursing in March 2025.

Paulia Elam Young '89, MS '91 happily retired after working as Division Manager of Human Resources at Houston Public Library.



1990

Michele Shanafelt Spees '94 retired after working as a Behavioral Interventionist.

Patricia Martin Pieczynski '95 is the Executive Director and Associate Controller at MD Anderson Cancer Center.

Suzanne Gerczak Weatherly '95 is a Professor at Lone Star College.

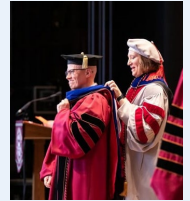
Jennifer Frnka Hargrave '96 is working at Jennifer Frnka Music Studio.

William Roberts MBA '96 has been supporting the Rockwell Automation oil and gas sales team in North America for the past six years. Bill's current focus is on helping customers automate and digitalize their business to improve their cycle time, address operational needs and reduce costs.

Gaye Beth Weintraub '97 was named Secretary of the Texas Prison Transparency Project.

Misty An Ruth '98 started a new position as a Dyslexia and Intervention Teacher in Pasadena ISD.

Jonathan Wiles '98 was awarded a PhD in Organizational Leadership with a concentration in Business Management from Eastern University in St. Davids, Pennsylvania. His dissertation was on "Crisis Vision Anchoring & Reiteration: A Theory Grounded in the Experiences of INGO Leaders during the COVID-19 Pandemic."



Jennifer Covington Maddox '99 is an Elementary School Registered Nurse for the Cypress Fairbanks Independent School District.

2000

Sandra Wolfe '00 is an Adjunct Faculty, Registered Nurse.

Gabriela Garcia '01 has been appointed as Chief Accounting Officer for Quanex Building Products Corporation.

Lucas Davis '01 started a new position as Land Surveying Manager at Ware Malcomb.

Mira Tawfik Keddiss '02 is a Professor of Medicine at Mayo Clinic.

Stephanie Johnson '04 is the Director of Logistics (G4) for the U.S. Army.

Sarah Anne Morris '05 is a Registered Nurse at Memorial Hermann.

Aaron Morris '05, MATS '05 is Lead Pastor at Sterling Wood Church.

Naomi Green '06 is a Senior Specialist at Travelers.

Meredith Hemmenway '06 has been named the new Director of Cypress Fairbanks ISD Virtual Pathways for the 2025-2026 school year.

HAPPY 1ST BIRTHDAY, KIZA!

Thank you to our wonderful partners who help care for Kiza—Westbury Animal Hospital for veterinary care and Rover Oaks Pet Resort for daycare and training.

A special thank you to the Dawn Williams Trozzo KIZA IV Husky Mascot Program for helping us bring Kiza IV into our HCU family and providing for her daily care.



Barbra Bell-Todd '08 recently celebrated 16 years with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

2010

Cassie Walton '10 is now working as a Service Account Provider at Climatec.

Christa Hall Langolf '11 started a new position as a Philanthropy Advisor at Texas Children's Hospital.

David Toney '11 started a new position as Director of Alumni & University Relations at Houston Christian University in August 2025. Go Huskies!

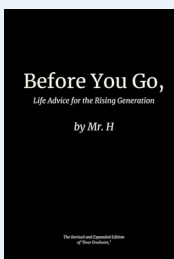
Russell Aaron Cox '12 is now working as a Sales Specialist at Specialty Equipment Corporation.

Jacklyn Chestnut '14 is a Women's Health Nurse Practitioner and graduated with her Master of Science in Nursing in 2022.

Christina Haynes '14 is a Teacher at Talihina High School.

Katie Kerbow '14 is an Epic Clinical eLearning Instructional Designer & Registered Nurse at Harris Health.

Michael Hernandez '15 published a book in 2024, "Before You Go, Life Advice for the Rising Generation." His book describes how Christian principles can be applied to practical life advice for kids in late high school and college.



Rickie Bradshaw III '16 is now working as the Vice President, Relationship Manager at Frost Bank.

Breana Moore Badger '17 started a new position as Corporate Communications Specialist at NPK.

MC Chukwujekwu '17 was a track and field athlete and a Season 49 contestant on "Survivor."

Alison Whitman '14, MMA '17 is a stay-at-home mom.

Andrea Khashchuk Dunn '18 is the owner of Homemaker & Wellness. She married her husband Daniel in 2024 and moved to South Carolina where he finished his medical residency and works as a Family Medicine Physician. They partner together in their wellness business and are now expecting a baby in March 2026.



Daniel Dimaculagan '19 is now working as a Pilot at Hawaiian Airlines.

Anu Titus '19 started a new position as a Nurse Practitioner at Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center.

2020

Ana Nava-Cardoso '21 was promoted to Assistant Vice President at Frost Bank.

Colleen Dunne '21 is an Attorney at The Monson Law Firm.

Morris Austin '22 is a professional baseball player for the Chicago White Sox.



Ira Cotton '22 is a Pastor at Camp Zion Rising Star Missionary Baptist Church.

Dr. Natalie Hudson EdD '22 has been named the Chief of Staff at the Neuhaus Education Center. She has an extensive track record of executive leadership in special education and a proven ability to bridge organizational vision with the specialized expertise needed to serve students with disabilities.



Erika Ortiz '22 is now working as a Medical Laboratory Scientist at UTMB.

Gabriela Paz MFA '22 started a new position as the Assistant Principal at International Leadership of Texas.

Marc Wynne '22 is a third-year law student at South Texas College of Law Houston and serves as the President of the Student Bar Association.



Xavier McIntyre '23 is Founder and CEO of OrganicX. The concept was inspired during his time at HCU as a walk-on who earned a full scholarship and saw firsthand the hydration and nutrition challenges athletes face. Today, OrganicX is pioneering a new "blue ocean" category in performance nutrition by merging hydration and micronutrition into one convenient, USDA-organic-focused supplement system. He is currently in the development and pilot phase, building toward a nationwide launch.



Christy Beckworth '24 started a new position as the Assistant Vice President of Mortgage Operations at First Service Credit Union.

Ashley Nandlal MS '24 is a Teacher in Pasadena ISD.

Jason Barnes '25 started a new position as a General Tutor at Houston Christian University.

Clarissa Akpotowho Clovis '25 is the Branch Manager at Harris County Tax Office in Spring Branch.

Elizabeth Iliev '25 started a new position as a Sr. Account Executive at Securitas & Technology.

Jeannette Park '25 is a Missions Director at LIT International.

Meredith Harrison McCall MFA '26 is a Fine Arts Facilitator in Alief ISD.

ALUMNI HUSKIES! HELP US STAY CONNECTED TO YOU.

New address? New email?
New job? Recently married?
Welcomed a Husky Pup?



HUSKIES SUPPORTING HUSKIES.

If you own a business, add it to our Alumni Business Directory and gain visibility within the alumni community. We highlight a new alumni-owned business each month in Alum-a-Grams and are launching a small business owner roundtable just for alumni.



Weddings

Samantha Solis Aiyub '16 recently married Wazir Aiyub on Oct. 24, 2025, in Wallisville, Texas. Professionally, she is a Sr. HR Analyst at Houston Methodist Hospital.



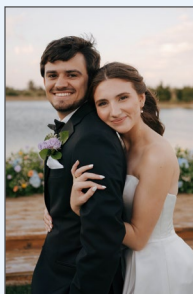
Sarah Ringer Baker '19, MLA '23 married Douglas Baker in 2024 and started a new position as a Kindergarten Teacher at The Saint Constantine School.



Kalynn Brown '17, MS '22 married **Terrell Brown '17, MIB '18**, in 2023. Terrell was a football player in 2013, and Kalynn Brown was the captain of the HCU Cheer Team from 2014-2017. In December of 2024, they welcomed their first child together, Kenzi Brown. They are so grateful for their time at HCU, where they first met.



Hope Etter '23 married **Dillon Etter '23** in October 2025 in Wichita, Kansas. The Etters live and work in Houston, Texas.



Husky Pups

Ashley Kiker Shantharaj '13, MA '18 welcomed her daughter, Phoebe Elizabeth, on April 2, 2025.



Laurence Martinez '14 and wife, Karmy, welcomed their first bundle of joy, Emma.



HCU HONORS “ROCK” HOLLEY FOR DECADES OF DEVOTION

Robert Holley, affectionately known as “Rock,” was recently honored for his dedication and commitment to the HCU Athletics Department. For decades, he has worked tirelessly behind the scenes at athletic events, quietly ensuring everything runs smoothly. To most spectators, he might seem like just another face in the crowd, but his dedication has touched countless athletes, coaches and colleagues. Throughout his service, Rock has remained humble, motivated by his faith in Jesus and his love for the HCU family. His work, whether managing logistics, supporting teams or mentoring athletes, often goes unnoticed, yet it has been vital to the life of the department. The recognition he received is a reminder that God sees and values those who serve faithfully, even when their efforts are unseen. Rock’s life exemplifies quiet dedication and heartfelt service.

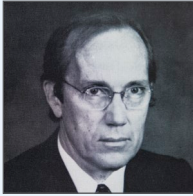


In Memoriam

Dr. Barbara J. Elliott, a beloved HCU Honors College professor, passed away March 8, 2026. A gifted teacher, scholar and former journalist, she inspired students to seek truth, goodness and beauty, leaving a lasting legacy through her writings, mentorship and faithful, compassionate life.



Dr. Wallace Hooker, a retired English faculty member who served from 1965 to 1990, passed away in January 2026. He was a strong advocate for creative writing, widely respected by his students, and served as a key historical resource for the University's history book, *An Act of Providence*.



Phaedon Papadopoulos, a former professor in the Archie W. Dunham College of Business, passed away on Oct. 28, 2025. After he retired, Phaedon restored an old Catalina 42 sailboat and obtained his Captain's license from the American Sailing Association.



Ronald Ofara MBA '80 passed away on Oct. 18, 2025. Born in Amsterdam, NY, and raised in Manhattan, NY, he attended Columbia University and graduated from SUNY Empire State College, later earning his MBA from Houston Baptist University.



Chuck Davis, passed away on Oct. 1, 2025, in McKinney. After seminary, Chuck entered campus ministry with the Baptist General Convention of Texas, serving as a Baptist Student Ministries Director at Houston Christian University.



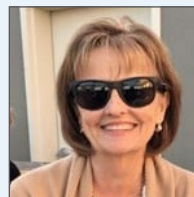
Dr. Voddie Baucham, Jr. '92 passed away Sept. 25, 2025. Houston Christian University mourns the sudden passing of Dr. Voddie Baucham, Jr., a cherished alumnus and powerful voice for truth. A 1992 HCU graduate, Voddie was known for making Scripture clear, relevant and uncompromising. Through his work in cultural apologetics, he helped countless people think and live biblically in every area of life. Coming to faith in college, Voddie spoke to skeptics with rare insight and compassion. His legacy as a pastor, teacher, husband and father of eight continues to inspire. We are honored to have called him one of our own. Well done, good and faithful servant.



Coach Gene Iba passed away on Sept. 22, 2025. He had a long and successful career as a basketball coach, leading the Huskies from 1977 to 1985 and compiling a 128-96 record. He was a two-time HCU Hall of Honor inductee, named individually in 2017 as well as with the 24-7 team of 1983-84. He recorded 20-win seasons in each of his last three seasons at the helm of the Huskies and posted two second-place TAAC finishes in 1982-83 and 1984-85.



Beth Ward Beach MS '98 passed away on Aug. 19, 2025. She retired from AT&T in 2007 and then pursued her lifelong passion for design, launching a career in interior design alongside her son, Christopher.



Becky-Lou Kline Ruiz '83 passed away Aug. 18, 2025. She enjoyed a fulfilling career of more than 40 years, working as a nurse midwife in labor and delivery before serving many years as a school nurse. Additionally, Becky-Lou had a passion for performing. A trained Mezzo-Soprano at the John F. Kennedy Opera House, she appeared in numerous musical theater productions and sang professionally at events.



Carol Walling Leaf '88 passed away on Aug. 16, 2025. Her professional journey was diverse and accomplished—she began her career as a manager at the Federal Reserve, demonstrating strong leadership and organizational skills, before following her passion for wellness by establishing and running her own successful physical fitness business. A devoted Christian, Carol's faith was the foundation of everything she did.

Randy Roy Stephens '92 passed away on San Andres Island, Columbia on Aug. 6, 2025. A former letterman at HCU, he remained involved with Columbian basketball.



Rick E. Ogden '98 passed away on Aug. 2, 2023. After serving in the United States Army, Rick returned to HCU to complete his degree in 1998. Rick served his alma mater as Assistant Vice President of Church & Community Relations and later as the Director of Special Projects for the President. After serving Aldine ISD as a Board Member for 26 years, the district named a school in his honor, Ogden Elementary School. Alongside his loving wife Charlotte, Rick touched countless lives at Memorial Baptist Church. His ministry there spanned well over 45 years and reached people of all ages. He devoted his life to serving God, both within the church walls and throughout his community.





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Congratulations 2026 Graduates!

Check out the full
gallery of photos

