## TABLE of EXPERTS Series

### Insights into: EDUCATION

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Dr. Charles M. (Chad) Carson
Interim Dean and Brock Family Endowed Chair in Entrepreneurship, Samford University

Dr. Charles M. (Chad) Carson serves as Interim Dean and Brock Family Endowed Chair in Entrepreneurship. Carson is a three-time recipient of the Outstanding Scholarship Award from Brock School of Business and was previously named the "Outstanding Educator" by the Federation of Business Disciplines / Southwest Case Research Association.

Dr. Carson has published over 45 peer reviewed articles in leading academic journals such as The Journal of Managerial Psychology, Case Research Journal, Educational and Psychological Measurement, Management Decision, Journal of Managerial Issues and Human Performance.

Dr. Carson has provided research, training, and consulting services to a wide range of organizations including ServisFirst Bank, Hillibett Sports, HealthSouth, Regions Bank, and G & O Supply Co.

Prior to entering the academic world Carson worked as a Senior Auditor for the State of Mississippi, and a Human Resources Benefits Generalist for Mississippi State University. Carson received his Ph.D. from the University of Mississippi and an M.B.A. and Accountancy degrees from Mississippi State University.

Dr. Eric P. Jack
Dean of the Collat School of Business, UAB

Dr. Eric P. Jack is the Wells Fargo Endowed Chair in Business Administration, Professor of Management, and Dean of the Collat School of Business at UAB. He has a BS in Industrial engineering from Georgia Tech, an MBA from Wright State University and a PhD in operations management from the University of Cincinnati.

Before beginning his academic career, Jack served for 21 years as a US Air Force officer where his responsibilities involved facilities planning, design, construction, and maintenance. He was a member of Leadership Birmingham Class of 2014, and serves on the boards of Rotary Club of Birmingham (Past President), The Innovation Depot, Malcovery Security LLC, the Birmingham Committee on Foreign Relations, United Way of Central Alabama and the Southern Business Administration Association. A naturalized US citizen, Jack was born on the island of Trinidad and Tobago. He is married to his engineering classmate, Ave Parker Jack from Augusta, Georgia. He is an avid golfer.

Dr. Kay M. Palan
Dean of the Culverhouse College of Business, The University of Alabama

Dr. Kay M. Palan is the ninth dean of the Culverhouse College of Business at The University of Alabama. Dr. Palan has served as dean and professor of marketing at Western Michigan University’s Haworth College of Business from 2010 through June 2016. She has more than 25 years of experience in academics, including a six-year stint as associate dean for undergraduate programs at Iowa State University.

Dr. Palan began her academic career as a teaching/research assistant at Texas Tech University, where she earned her doctorate in business in 1994. She served as an assistant professor of marketing at Iowa State from 1994-2000 and as an associate professor from 2000-2010. She served as interim associate dean for undergraduate programs for two years at Iowa State before her selection as associate dean in 2006.

She earned a Master of Business Administration from Minnesota State University Moorhead and a Bachelor of Science in nursing from Winona State University.

Dr. Palan also has industry experience as executive director at Health Enterprises in Fargo, North Dakota and as director of the Traill County Nursing Services in Hillsboro, North Dakota.

Dr. Ross Alexander
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, University of North Alabama

Dr. Ross Alexander serves as Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at the University of North Alabama (UNA), a position he has held since July 2017. While at UNA, he has led record enrollment growth, implemented a number of new graduate and undergraduate degree programs, and instituted numerous student success initiatives. Prior to UNA, Dr. Alexander held several leadership positions at Indiana University East (IUE), some concurrently, including Dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences; Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Dean of Graduate & Continuing Education; and Campus Director for Online Programs. Prior to IUE, Dr. Alexander was a faculty member, department chair, and program director at the University of North Georgia. A political scientist by training, Dr. Alexander has published a number of books, chapters, and articles in the areas of online education, American politics, state and local governance, public budgeting and finance, higher education policy, and gambling policy, among others. He has won numerous teaching and advising awards and remains an active classroom teacher, teaching graduate and undergraduate courses—online, hybrid, and traditional—in organizational theory and leadership, state and local government, American politics, public budgeting and finance, American political theory, and public administration and policy, among others.

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Q: With talent development being among the top priorities for businesses, how is your institution adapting to fill the needs of employers?

Eric P. Jack: We are an urban university that fully embraces our academic and medical missions to help the Birmingham community succeed. UAB occupies 100 square blocks in downtown Birmingham and has more than 22,000 students. In our College of Business, we have approximately 3,500 students supported by 100 faculty and staff. The 2020 U.S. News and World Report ranked us as one of the nation’s top-20 institutions for online master’s degrees in Accounting and Management Information Systems. We also ranked as one of the best MBA programs and Best Undergraduate Business Programs. We were the first business school in Alabama to require internships as a requirement for graduation. Our educational strategy explicitly entails formal engagements and partnerships with local businesses, which serve as experiential extensions of our classrooms. UAB recently announced a partnership with the City of Birmingham – the Birmingham Promise program – to provide scholarships that will invest in developing the talent of our high school graduates. Our Collat School of Business has a 50-year history of success in working closely with the business community to meet their evolving needs for talent. We have invested significantly to have cutting-edge facilities and resources, such as our career center, which enable us to partner directly with employers in order to prepare our students for careers.

Kay M. Palan: With the world of business in a constant and drastic state of evolution, we stay in-tune with the needs of employers and our corporate partners. To ensure that our students have the critical skills that employers are looking for, we have implemented programs such as UA Business Lead, which grows professional competencies like resilience, adaptability, and the ability to collaborate and communicate effectively. Almost every major employer is searching for talent to fill roles that require the ability to develop and lead complex data analytics or information systems projects. Our new academic programs such as our Master’s of Business Analytics and Management Information Systems feature curricula that impart technical chops and grow leadership skills, all taught by faculty with extensive industry experiences. Furthermore, an advisory committee of industry professionals has been formed within the College to help guide our data analytics and cybersecurity curricula.

Charles M. “Chad” Carson: Through endless experiential learning opportunities and participation in rigorous academic programs, Samford students enter the workforce quickly and ready to contribute their talent, knowledge and skills the moment they graduate. Six months after graduation, 97 percent of May 2019 graduates and 99 percent of Brock School of Business graduates reported being either employed or continuing their education in graduate school. Samford is an important source of workforce talent for the Birmingham community. While the university enrolls students from 47 states and 28 countries, many of our graduates decide to remain in our local communities upon graduation. Of our 2019 graduates, 44 percent chose to stay in Birmingham to enter the workforce.

Ross Alexander: UNA is an innovative, agile and entrepreneurial institution with degree programs to match. We have successfully branded ourselves as Alabama’s Workforce Development University, which is more than just a tagline or marketing play. Many of our degree and credentialing programs were developed with direct feedback from, and in conjunction with, industry partners both in our region and beyond. The goal is to produce career-ready graduates who are able to meet industry demand for high-paying and sought-after jobs across a number of sectors, with an emphasis on STEM, healthcare and financial services. Additionally, UNA developed the first-ever set of micro-credentials offered in Alabama that can be used immediately in the marketplace or stacked within degree programs at the graduate or undergraduate level. This also was developed with direct feedback and participation from industry partners, and delivered in a flexible online format.

Q: How can companies use higher education/continuing education to create career development opportunities to help their retention efforts?

Palan: As the saying goes, people are a company’s most valuable resource. While this may be something of a cliche, that does not mean it’s not true. As a result, a company should look at ways it can invest in human capital, and one of the best is by helping them improve their skills and professional capabilities through continuing education and training. As a result, those employees can realize professional goals, including gaining new responsibilities and earning promotions and recognition. They also can become innovators and leaders in their organization, and they may become more loyal. Furthermore, offering continuing education opportunities and resources has benefits in the recruiting process as well, since talented recent graduates actively seek out educational benefits when looking for new jobs.

Carson: In an effort to attract and retain good employees, it would be to the company’s benefit to offer continuing education and/or some sort of support for an advanced degree, especially for employees of the millennial generation who have taken over the workforce. These young employees and top performers from all generations have a different set of expectations and demands. Corporations need to recognize this and adapt accordingly. Organizations can ignore the inevitable and keep doing what they are doing, or they can reevaluate the traditional workplace and make adjustments to attract and retain top talent. Organizations may lament issues like high turnover, typically saying salary is the culprit, but compensation is rarely the root cause. Competitive compensation is important, but organizations need to consider investing in training and providing the resources for personal development. Top performers are not just interested in working their way up the ladder. They are interested in making lateral career moves in pursuit of happiness and fulfillment, not just financial rewards. Supporting professional development is one way that companies can attract and retain valued employees.

Alexander: UNA is a leader in this effort through the development of learning agreements with a variety of partners in the corporate, health care and public sectors. UNA partners with existing business and industry to provide graduate and undergraduate courses through our online degree programs. Employees receive a high-quality and in-demand degree at a discounted tuition rate. This results in a powerful strategy to retain as well as attract talent, especially when coupled with the company’s own tuition remission program. These learning agreements have been transformational in UNA’s enrollment growth and brand expansion and have also helped our partners retain talent. While UNA’s portfolio of more than 15 completely online degree programs at the graduate and undergraduate levels appeals to employers, our MBA, M.Acc., and BBA in Professional Management have been especially attractive to our corporate partners. We also feel confident that our new Executive Doctor of Business Administration, which is set to launch in the spring of 2021, will have similar resonance and relevance.

Jack: It is clear that in response to the increasing pace of change in our economy, many companies are challenged to develop both internal and external training programs in order to improve retention to maintain the required skills, knowledge and abilities of their workforce. Companies have financed this training using both company expertise and higher education resources, via tuition assistance at two-year and four-year institutions.
At Collat, we have strategically positioned ourselves to fill these needs by offering our programs both on campus and online. This flexibility allows us to meet the educational needs of working professionals across the U.S. For example, among our 3,500 enrolled students, 1,200 of them are working professionals who matriculate completely online. We also have courses, certificates and programs focused on life-long learning through professional continuing education.

Q: What is a program or offering that your school is particularly proud of?  
Carson: Each Brock School of Business student is required to complete a four-course sequence in data analytics, regardless of their major. Samford's data analytics program is offered in partnership with SAS, the global leader in data analytics software. Students in the program have had the chance to work on data-centered projects for some of the world's largest brands including Nike and Coca-Cola. Students also have the opportunity to complete an internship in Samford's Center for Sports Analytics which promotes the intersection of big data, analytics and sports. The center is a proven area where analytics impacts sports, including fan engagement, sponsorship, player tracking, sports medicine, sports media and operations. Simultaneously, our social entrepreneurship program is one of 30 of its kind in the world and the only one in Alabama. While offering classes in core business disciplines, the program matches a student's goal of pursuing opportunities in the business and nonprofit world dedicated to helping solve social problems. The companies and organizations that engage in social entrepreneurship range from Fortune 500 companies to nonprofit organizations. Our innovative curriculum teaches Samford students the knowledge needed to address the most challenging social issues facing our world today. Hands-on experiential learning is a hallmark of the Samford experience. Our Bulldog Fund is a student-managed investment fund allowing students to conduct security analysis and portfolio management well over $2.3 million of the university's endowment. The students have the opportunity to work in the Stifel / Merchant Capital Portfolio Room. Additionally, Brock School of Business is a Bloomberg Experiential Learning Partner which provides numerous opportunities for our students, including Bloomberg terminals and access to Bloomberg Market Concepts, webinars hosted by market specialists to stay on top of the latest trends, and the Bloomberg Trading Challenge, an eight-week competition in which student teams can use the Bloomberg Terminals to generate investment strategies.

Alexander: I am particularly proud of our MBA. With nearly 900 students, we have been continually recognized by the Birmingham Business Journal as having the largest MBA program in Alabama. UNA is a public, comprehensive regional university that is very proud of its mission and trajectory. To have a highly-ranked, AACSB-accredited MBA program of its size is a point of pride for the university. The program has proven a pathway to career advancement for hundreds of professionals who need a flexible and affordable online degree program from an institution that cares deeply about their educational experience and career success. Our MBA has provided a reliable template for other programs throughout the College of Business and across the university, resulting in impressive enrollment growth and brand expansion.

Jack: We have eight undergraduate programs and three graduate programs at the Collat School of Business that are delivered both on campus and fully online. Our MBA program, with more than 600 students, is our largest graduate program. Accounting is our largest undergraduate program, and it enjoys many excellent working relationships with a variety of accounting firms that support our program and recruit our students. In our B.S. in Industrial Distribution program, students prepare for successful careers in technical sales for either engineered products or medical devices and pharmaceuticals. The Industrial Distribution program offers two tracks where students must combine either engineering courses or healthcare courses that prepare them to master technical sales content across a variety of industrial distribution specialties.

Palan: Our MBA program is bucking a national overall decline in such programs. Much of that can be attributed to our STEM Path to the MBA and CREATE Path to the MBA programs that expose students in STEM and humanities degree tracks to business honors courses as freshmen, with admission to our MBA program.
University of NORTH ALABAMA

Bachelor of Business Administration
Offered both online and on campus.

Master of Accounting
A flexible online program for aspiring CPAs.

Executive Doctor of Business Administration
Take your degree to the next level, with this hybrid, low-residency program.

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Q: What are some of the continuing education opportunities your school provides for those already in the workforce or the corporate world? 

Jack: We are responding strategically to the growing need for life-long learning for those already in the workforce. Under the leadership of Dr. Cori Perdue as director of professional education, we are strengthening our capacity to deliver continuing education programs. For example, we recently signed an agreement with a major Birmingham employer to train 2,200 employees in such content areas as leadership, sales and operations. We have signed an agreement with the National Center for Women in Technology that sponsors project management training and designates us as a leading provider for the Alabama Digital Skills Initiative. This initiative will provide scholarships and pathways for upskilling many women who are returning to the workforce. We have increased our offerings of continuing professional education courses, such as Accounting CPE, needed to maintain certifications. Finally, we have leveraged our continuing education platform during the past 12 years to operate our Healthcare Leadership Academy, which has provided leadership training for more than 300 emerging leaders of the UAB healthcare system. 

Palan: Our Executive MBA offered through our Manderson Graduate School of Business is specifically tailored to mid-career professionals who are looking to advance their education and expand their base of practical business intelligence. The Manderson EMBA offers students flexibility in an everyday-weekend, face-to-face format. We also offer the degree in the Huntsville area with a blended online and once-a-month, in-class format. However, students enroll, they will be taught by faculty who have led our MBA program to the 26th best spot in the country for public institutions, according to U.S. News & World Report. We also offer nine specialized masters degrees, three of which are completely online, for those working professionals who want to develop or beef up their current knowledge in a specific area of business. Our Master of Professional Studies program is ranked 10th nationally by U.S. News & World Report for 2020 for the second year in the row. 

Carson: Brock School of Business offers nationally ranked degree programs as well as a wide range of executive and continuing education opportunities. Our accounting program ranks in the top 9 percent nationally. Results returned from the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy showed Samford students sitting for the Certified Public Accountant exam in 2018 ranked No. 1 in Alabama among first-time test takers holding a bachelor’s degree. They also achieved the highest average score in the state. U.S. News and World Report ranks our M.B.A. program No. 54 in the nation for best online graduate programs. Our program encourages students to customize their education by offering classes on campus in the evenings or online, giving them the flexibility to meet personal and professional obligations while advancing their career. Concentration options in entrepreneurship, finance and marketing are available along with a number of joint degree programs. Our Executive Education program offers custom solutions to many business and corporate partners. We offer a wide array of courses and customized offerings including half-day sessions on business writing, one-day sessions on Excel, and weeklong leadership development sessions that address all functional areas of business and enterprise. Some of our most popular offerings include negotiation skills, conflict management, customer service excellence, treasury management and communication skills. 

Alexander: UNA is increasingly invested in online and adult education at the graduate and undergraduate levels. Nearly 25 percent of our more than 8,000 students are enrolled in completely online degree programs, most at the graduate level. Our College of Business is leading this effort with three degree programs of note – the MBA, the Master of Accountancy, and the BBA in Professional Management – all of which are experiencing significant growth in enrollment. While the demographic trends for traditional students in our region are not favorable, the percentage of adults seeking a baccalaureate degree or graduate degree is growing, and UNA is well-positioned to capitalize upon that market. Each of these degree programs is showing double-digit enrollment growth annually, and all three are focused on working adults engaged in the workforce and corporate world. Our learning agreements with corporate partners have been integral to this successful strategy.

Q: In your view, what is the most valuable benefit of attending your institution? 

Palan: In our mission statement, we emphasize the hands-on, personal-touch approach we take to develop the next generation of business leaders. This is no hyperbole. Our faculty and staff work hard to ensure that all our students are exposed to experiential learning opportunities during their time with us. In terms of support, our advising and career centers are equipped to guide them through their academic journeys to their first jobs after graduation. Furthermore, we are making significant investments in infrastructure and personnel to support and enhance our mission going into the future. 

Carson: Samford is a highly personal and relational institution. Our student to faculty ratio is low, about 13-to-1, allowing small classes where our faculty enjoy a high degree of interaction with our students. Student advising and career counseling are significant priorities, resulting in a highly personalized experience. In fact, The Wall Street Journal ranked Samford third nationally for student engagement. Samford’s mission to nurture student development intellectually, ethically and spiritually is fostered through an array of opportunities, including 166 student organizations, global engagement in more than 19 different countries, and more than 180 courses that incorporate community service. Additionally, undergraduate students complete Samford’s core curriculum, providing a well-rounded foundation in the liberal arts. Samford is consistently ranked among the top Christian universities in the country. Our Brock School of Business faculty and staff work hand-in-hand to offer a personalized world-class business education delivered through a Christian worldview. We work to integrate Christian faith and best business practices, and graduate students who are well-prepared academically and able to address the most challenging issues in business with ethics and integrity.

Alexander: Regardless of modality of delivery – whether traditional or online – or the level of degree program, all our students receive a highly-personalized education at an affordable price. More than 80 percent of the courses in all our programs are taught by full-time faculty members who are leading experts in their fields. Just as important as their knowledge, the faculty get to know their students very well and forge connections that can benefit students throughout their chosen careers. UNA offers the same rigorous programs found at much larger universities but with a more personal touch. 

Jack: It would have to be the professional expertise and genuine care and consideration for students in our programs. Our dedicated team of 100 faculty and staff members are experts at preparing all kinds of students to attend college. We particularly enjoy serving first-generation college students. To achieve our exciting mission, we employ
a mix of seasoned practitioners and world-class scholars alongside a very caring staff. We also invest in a variety of retention and career preparedness programs.

Q: How do you think the world of education has evolved over the past decade?

Alexander: First, students of all types are more cost-conscious and desire a more expeditious path to a degree or credential. Second, students, parents and policymakers appropriately and understandably want programs that are aligned to career and workforce outcomes. Third, states have proven unwilling or unable to support public higher education at the same levels as before the Great Recession, which places greater pressure on universities to be more innovative and flexible to secure necessary revenue streams, which is not necessarily a negative outcome. Fourth, students of all types need additional and better support services to bolster and enrich their classroom learning experience.

Jack: Over the past 10 years, higher education has evolved slowly but deliberately to the changing needs for education programs. New online and hybrid programs have been developed to respond to the needs of the working professionals while also addressing the school’s needs to gain efficiencies in certifying their students’ mastery of academic content. Many for-profit entities have entered this arena using different business models that have sometimes succeeded and sometimes failed. More traditional universities have also responded by adopting digital platforms to meet the need for academic program flexibility and reach, while controlling for quality and costs. We have successfully leveraged these platforms and a range of hybrid capabilities to meet these challenges.

Palan: Students are much more interested in the bottom-line cost of attending an institution and the ROI of a particular degree. I think we can attribute most of that to headlines about the high costs of higher ed and the massive amount of outstanding student loan debt carried by those who have attended college. To help students more effectively explore the large number of career options available to them, we facilitate a wide number of interactions with employers in the form of networking events, internships/co-ops, experiential learning opportunities, and so on. This is all so students are exposed to the nature of work they may be expected to do well before they enter the workforce. This way they can decide for themselves if a given career is right for them and if not, they can adjust course into something that makes more sense. None of this is unfamiliar to those of us who work in higher ed, but what is new is how this conversation with prospective students and their parents is taking place well before the admission process begins.

Q: How do you think education will evolve over the next decade, and what is your school doing to capitalize?

Carson: Online education will continue to be a significant part of the future of higher education. Brock School of Business offers our M.B.A. in an online delivery model, and while using the same faculty as our face-to-face classes. At the same time, Samford and Brock School of Business are ahead of the curve when it comes to facing the next decade. Our data analytics program is highly advanced. Global education is on the rise, and Samford has already taken leaps to address this opportunity for our students. From our Developmental Economics course in Rwanda to our university-owned dormitory in London, Samford students have the opportunity to experience real-world learning both here at home and abroad. In fact, half our students have studied abroad.

Jack: The world of higher education will be significantly influenced by several factors, including the cycle time for degree completion, the process and quality of student learning outcomes, and the increasing costs juxtaposed with rising tuition and fees. The marketplace is asking for more timely micro-credentials such as badges and certificates to certify a student’s mastery of specific skills, knowledge and abilities. We continue to invest strategically in these offerings. As we do so, we seek input from the seasoned professionals and employers who serve on our advisory boards. In this way, we remain in sync with the evolving needs of the employers who hire our graduates.

Palan: We feel that schools will continue to add and refine programs in experiential learning, which takes many different forms such as an internship, co-op, student organizations, and in-class collaboration. However, no matter the form, each serves as a complement to the classroom, improving a student’s ability to critically analyze and evaluate the relationship between academic knowledge and real-world contexts. At Culverhouse, we provide a high-quality experiential learning program that motivates and excites our students to practice the critical thinking skills they have learned and demonstrate what they can do. Prospective students and their parents are excited to hear that we have staff dedicated to fostering experiential learning opportunities, and we look forward to further growing that program.

Q: What are some of the top challenges in the education world? How is your school responding?

Carson: A top challenge facing higher education is the escalating cost of attendance. Samford is committed to remaining affordable and accessible, and we are recognized nationally for the value of our programs. In its evaluation of nearly 1,200 four-year institutions, Kiplinger’s identifies the colleges and universities that offer “high-quality education at an affordable price,” based on objective measurements of academic quality and affordability. The
THE DISCUSSION

ranking places Samford 34th among all private universities and 115th nationally among all public, private and liberal arts colleges and universities in the country. Samford is in the top 10 percent of the institutions assessed nationwide, and is the highest-ranked for value of all private and public universities in Alabama. The university also was recognized by U.S. News & World Report as one of the top universities granting merit-based financial aid. Further, universities today must be committed to maintaining exceptional career services and professional development to ensure the employment of its graduates. One way that we represent this commitment is through our Office of Professional Success, which ensures that every student receives personalized career counseling. Through the support of this office, students get to participate in our Professional Development course—a series of activities and events scheduled throughout their academic experience focused on building career skills. Simultaneously, this office manages our Academic Internship Program, which is designed to provide students the opportunity to gain practical experience in a professional work environment.

**Alexander:** The top challenge for all universities is remaining relevant and competitive for a more diverse set of learners with increasing needs, demands and preferences. Demographics are changing rapidly, and institutions must adopt a more industry or corporate strategy to pivot, evolve and remain relevant in a more volatile and unpredictable environment. I feel confident in UNA’s ability to be successful in this new marketplace thanks to the quality and flexibility of our programs, ability to develop programs and credentials in collaboration with industry partners, expertise of our faculty, and sound leadership under President Ken Kitts.

Q: What makes your school special?

**Carson:** Samford University is consistently recognized as one of the top Christian universities in the country today. Our mission is to educate the whole person—intellectually, personally, professionally and spiritually. This holistic approach to student development is fostered through an array of opportunities, including 166 student organizations, global engagement in more than 19 different countries and more than 180 courses that incorporate community service. The university also is nationally recognized for the quality of our teaching. This year, U.S. News & World Report ranked Samford No. 40 nationally for Best Undergraduate Teaching, a ranking that places us in the top 1 percent of higher education institutions in our country today and the top-ranked university in the state of Alabama.

**Alexander:** UNA’s agility and emphasis on academic innovation, all with a focus on student success. We can respond directly to market and industry needs to develop graduate degree programs, undergraduate degree programs, and micro-credentials in as little as six months in order to meet student, market and industry demand. This agility allows students to receive a high-quality education at a reasonable cost and position themselves for a good job immediately upon graduation. A good example is the development and launch of our online Master of Accountancy in 2018, which went from concept to implementation in six months. The program has been a resounding success, with nearly 100 students enrolled in only its second year. Similarly, we gauged the market and seized on the opportunity to develop an Executive Doctor of Business Administration. This low-residency, cohort-based, hybrid doctoral program focused on mid-career executives will launch in the spring of 2021 at a very competitive price point.

**Jack:** At the Collat School of Business, we leverage value-added partnerships that serve the community strategically. We deploy a range of innovative programs such as industrial distribution, entrepreneurship, technology commercialization, professional education and graduate dual-degrees such as MD/MBA, Dentistry/MBA, and Optometry/MBA. To enhance our value propositions, we continually adapt and develop our overall educational experience in response to the evolving external environment. By leveraging these flexible strategies, we are well-positioned to continue offering a world-class educational experience while serving our region for many years to come.

"We are responding strategically to the growing need for life-long learning for those already in the workforce. Under the leadership of Dr. Cori Perdue as director of professional education, we are strengthening our capacity to deliver continuing education programs."

- Dr. Eric Jack

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