A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR:

Rutgers Professional Science Master’s program (PSM) continues to grow and thrive—remaining one of Rutgers University’s largest master’s programs, with strong alumni engagement, numerous industry partnerships, and program enrichments that are second to none. Our experiential-based learning model allows students to hone the skills they need to be successful at MBS and beyond—yielding graduates who can readily, adeptly apply their knowledge to solve real-world problems, and who can pivot, refocus, and succeed in times of rapid change. This newsletter chronicles just a few of many events and highlights from 2021—all showcasing the diversity, versatility, and excellence of both our program and our students. Over the next several months, we will be expanding our academic offerings, so it’s an exciting time! I look forward to another year of innovation and progress, and wish everyone a happy, healthy, and productive 2022!

Dr. Deborah Silver

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How do you navigate the current economy or plan your career in the current skills-based labor market? Where do you begin? Helping students gain this clarity and chart their work/life path is where our program truly shines. Here’s what makes our program unique:

Executive Coaching. We support students’ life and career goals through two main initiatives: executive coaching — available to all students and alumni — and through the Stanford-University-based “Designing Your Life (DYL)” tools and philosophy.

Professional Education. Our certificate programs and professional courses allow individuals to “upskill,” and acquire or hone certain skills while not pursuing a formal degree. There are discounted fees for MBS alumni, and, for certain courses, digital badges to accompany completion. Read more about the wide variety of course offerings!

Skills-Based Curricula. We keep curricula dynamic, with skills-based instruction and academic and career alignment that is cutting-edge, on-trend, and current thanks to expert instructors, a strong industrial advisory board, and a focus on real-time workforce needs.

Career-focused Workshops. In addition to one-on-one executive coaching, MBS students enjoy access to targeted, action-based workshops such as “Leveling Up Your LinkedIn Profile,” and the DYL-based “Designing and Securing Your Ideal Work Life.”

The MBS education model is experiential in nature, with courses structured so that students are constantly applying classroom instruction to real-world circumstances, whether through formal programs such as MBS’s Internships Program or Externship Exchange, through concept-to-market courses like Applied Artificial Intelligence or Mobile App Development, through immersive offerings such as Introduction to User Experience Design, or within students’ own day-to-day professions. Semester-end presentations further enhance students’ ability to successfully communicate and present ideas.

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The MBS Science & Technology Management Capstone
The MBS Capstone is the last step before graduation: the course in which students integrate and apply all of the knowledge and skills they’ve acquired throughout their MBS education. Working in multidisciplinary teams, students identify a patented technology, determine a novel use, and then create comprehensive concept-to-market business plans which they present to industry experts during semester-end “Venture Forum” presentations. These expert “judges” evaluate each project for originality, viability, supportive research, and overall business strategy. Between May and December, nearly 200 students split among 38 teams pitched their proposed innovations.

The MBS Externship Exchange
The MBS Externship Exchange pairs teams of students with company-sponsored small projects — allowing externs to gain valuable work experience while allowing participating employers to evaluate the potential impact of their projects. In 2021 alone, the work and ideas of more than 300 externs resulted in viable solutions for more than 95 industry partners. The spring 2021 presentations took place on April 27; summer and fall presentations were held over two days on August 3 and August 10, and December 7 and December 14, respectively.

The MBS Internships Program
The MBS Internship Program is open to students who are completing either a professional or research internship. Guided by an executive coach, students apply and leverage course-specific instruction throughout their internships while honing essential business skills. The MBS program is particularly unique in that students are able to perform internships within their own workplaces. To date, 86 percent of all internships are either extended or converted to full-time employment. The MBS Internship Program is open to students who are completing either a professional or research internship. Guided by an executive coach, students apply and leverage course-specific instruction throughout their internships while honing essential business skills. The MBS program is particularly unique in that students are able to perform internships within their own workplaces. To date, 86 percent of all internships are either extended or converted to full-time employment. Semester-end presentations took place on May 6, 2021 (spring), on August 9 (summer) and on December 8 (fall), respectively.

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Our alumni work across industries, functions, professional levels, and geographical locations; their collective success and engagement fuels the success of the MBS program. Formed in 2018, the MBS Alumni Group has been rapidly expanding since its inception, with alumni engagement tripling in the past year alone as former students returned to serve on panels, host networking events, and give industry-specific lectures of their own.

Alumni Insights

Through “Virtual Fridays”—virtual “brown bags” that debuted during the pandemic and have become a fixture—alumni have discussed their current success as well as their experiences as MBS students, and the available courses, resources, and opportunities that helped them throughout the MBS journey.

The Rutgers MBS Alumni Student Mentoring Program

The Alumni-student connection is a valuable one, where students can gain insight into career-specific trends and developments and network with alumni leaders in fields including personal care, drug discovery & development, analytics, and more. Through the Alumni-Student mentoring initiative, students now have the opportunity to connect one-on-one to discuss MBS-specific topics ranging from career advice to networking to job-searching tips.

Alumna Discusses the Value of An MBS “Confidence Mindset”

In any job market, the candidates who have the greatest advantage are those who can integrate technical knowledge with soft skills including communication, leadership, creativity, and teamwork—skills that MBS students constantly hone. Alumna Caroline Thorpe MBS’20 knows the value of an MBS degree firsthand. However, as a former recruiter, Thorpe’s background in identifying good hires combined with her experience as an MBS student gives her a unique perspective on how an MBS education gives students additional leverage in today’s economy.

Inaugural Innovator

Last year, MBS student, Aparna Jadhav was selected from a university-wide pool of applicants as the first-ever TechAdvance Intern, through what is now known as the TechAdvance Senior Fellowship. Jadhav had a unique opportunity to help Rutgers researchers commercialize their innovations through TechAdvance, a unit of Rutgers Innovation Ventures, which provides gap funding to Rutgers researchers who are aspiring to commercialize their inventions.

Great Chemistry

This summer, two MBS students and three recent graduates were awarded scholarships for their communications and social media work with the New York chapter of the Society of Cosmetic Chemists (NYSCC). Initially partnering through the MBSExternship Exchange, the NYSCC continues to provide students in MBS’s personal care science concentration an opportunity to gain industry experience and further their education while supporting NYSCC’s mission of advancing cosmetic science.

“Microsoft Will See You Now”

This past summer, Prabha Kansagra, a student in entrepreneur Mike Grandinetti’s signature course, Design Innovation: Make & Market Anything, came up with design solutions so viable that she landed an audience with Microsoft’s GroupMe leadership team. Kansagra’s ideas not only impressed the team, but led to a Microsoft-sponsored innovation tournament, which Kansagra and MBS alumna Kruttika Raman MBS’21 helped mentor.

“YES, IT’S WORTH IT!”

Kimberly Berry, a design professional based in Los Angeles, California, had more than a decade of experience in graphic design and user experience when she decided to pursue a Master of Business and Science (MBS) degree in User Experience Design (UXD). A successful designer with a versatile portfolio and diverse clientele, one would wonder how and why Berry felt that earning a master’s degree would further propel her career. We asked, Berry answered.
This year’s exuberant spring ceremony, held on May 13, 2021, honored Master of Business and Science (MBS) degree graduates from October 2020, January 2021, and May 2021. Emceed by executive coach Kathleen Cashman-Walter, the evening was buzzing with excitement as graduates crossed the finish line of their MBS education with honor and plenty of congratulatory messages from the instructors who have guided them in their MBS journeys, as seen in this FABULOUS FACULTY VIDEO, kicked off by Rupa Misra, Ed.D., professor and program coordinator for MBS’s User Experience Design (UXD) concentration.

FALL 2021 brought weeks of beautiful weather, which allowed MBS students, faculty, alumni, and staff the opportunity to safely meet, mingle, and connect while also social distancing—and even learning (above)—outdoors.

MBS Fall Meet & Greet
The first in-person gathering since March 2020, the October 19, 2021, MBS Meet & Greet commenced under starry skies, with crisp fall air allowing MBS faculty, staff, and students to meet one another in person—many for the first time. Kathleen Cashman-Walter served as event facilitator, leading activities including one icebreaker that proves it takes only 15 seconds to find three things in common with another person. The event was fun and much needed—truly, a breath of fresh air for all.

MBS Spooktacular
The MBS Spooktacular is a fan-favorite—a fun, mid-semester festivity (and study break) to which we all look forward each fall. After moving (temporarily) to a virtual platform last year, the Spooktacular was back in-person, on-campus, with raffles, prizes, and, of course, costumes and candy. With fall foliage providing a perfect backdrop, the event was a great success—a 100 percent treat 😊

MBS Fall Graduation Celebration Luncheon
In addition to virtual ceremonies held in May, Rutgers University hosted in-person, school-based events throughout the fall to officially honor the Classes of 2020 and 2021. Accordingly, MBS faculty and staff feted graduates on October 21 with a luncheon prior to the School of Graduate Studies ceremony at the Rutgers Athletic Center, with weather providing a perfect backdrop for festivities.

Going to Market - The IKEA Field Trip
On October 29, 2021, students in Mark Burgess’s Market Assessment and Analysis course resumed a time-honored tradition: making an in-person field trip to IKEA—a store that has mastered the art of creating superior customer experience (CX). In fact, IKEA knows what you need before you do—even the kitchen displays are fully equipped with cooking utensils and cookware available for purchase. It’s the perfect venue to give examples of “best practices” in marketing.

Back in Business - MBS at NYSCC Suppliers’ Day
Over three days in November, students in MBS’s Personal Care Science concentration had the fantastic opportunity to network and connect with cosmetic and personal care industry leaders and each other while showcasing MBS program excellence during the New York Society of Cosmetic Chemists (NYSCC) Suppliers’ Day, the premier industry event in all of North America, which was held at the Jacob Javits Convention Center in New York City on Wednesday, November 10, and Thursday, November 11, with a virtual day on Friday, November 12.
EXTRAORDINARY EVENTS

DURING AN EXTRAORDINARY YEAR

MBS Inaugural Personal Care Science Symposium: Rutgers PSM program is one of only three programs in the nation to offer a master’s degree in personal care science (PCS). With many of the world’s top cosmetics and personal care manufacturers located—like Rutgers—in the New York / New Jersey metropolitan area, the MBS degree has become well-known among industry professionals. This fall, MBS Hosted its first-ever PCS symposium—Ethnic and Regional Considerations in Personal Care Sciences: A Scientific and Business Perspective—a long-awaited, two-day event that featured esteemed industry experts as presenters (including several MBS alumni and students). More than a year in the making, Day One featured a star-studded lineup of personal care and beauty industry experts who shared their extensive experience and scientific knowledge from years of research in the area of skincare. Day Two featured fantastic talks and presentations on topics ranging from sunscreen product regulations, to creating sunscreen formulations for all skin tones, to hair needs and products for diverse consumer groups. The symposium wrapped on a high note with an incredible entrepreneurial roundtable moderated by innovation expert Lori Dars.

JOURNEY THROUGH THE DECADES: COMPUTER SCIENCE PIONEERS

On June 17, 2021, three computer science pioneers joined together for a special panel presentation, Women in IT: Journey Through the Decades, during which they discussed their respective careers, experiences, and achievements as early technologists in the ’60s, ’70s, and ’80s. Sponsored by Rutgers University Women in Technology Group (WIT), the interactive, virtual event was co-moderated by MBS student Laura Gordon, a web developer for Rutgers School of Arts and Sciences, and fellow WIT member Abeer Elhara, assistant dean for data management and security at Rutgers School of Arts and Sciences–Newark.

Our esteemed panelists:
- Deborah Silver, Ph.D., executive director and co-founder of the Professional Science Master’s program at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
- Arlene Rosenbaum, independent computer software professional and former president of a direct-marketing agency
- Nihal Nounou, Ph.D., general manager and chief scientist of enterprise strategy and architect software solutions, Horizons

A full video of the event can be viewed here.

THE BEST OF MBS NEWSLETTER

EXCELLENCE

ACADEMIC

Expert Advice, Given Twice: Winter & Fall Industrial Advisory Board (IAB) Mixers

The MBS Industrial Advisory Board (IAB) is a hugely valuable resource for the MBS community. Comprised of STEM-based business leaders representing nearly all of MBS’s 25 academic concentrations, IAB members pool their vast knowledge and expertise to help shape curriculum and keep programming and related initiatives cutting-edge, relevant, and impactful. IAB members and students connected through two themed virtual mixers: February’s 90 minutes to Navigate, Collaborate, and Network, and October’s Where Are We Now and Where Are We Going?

The Epitome of Excellence

Since joining the MBS program in December 2019, Beth Ann Murphy, MBS’s Academic Officer and Life Science Coordinator, has made a great impact in very short order—using her vast background as a business-scientist to streamline administrative processes, revamp curricula, spearhead, create, and co-create new programs—including the MBS Book Club—and expand access to academic enrichments that directly impact students’ success, such as implementing a business writing workshop for STEM professionals, and—in partnership with industry expert and MBS instructor Kristina Kannheiser—coordinating and executing October’s highly successful and inaugural Personal Care Science Symposium, the inspiration for which she shared in her opening remarks, “A 10,000-Foot View with a Focus on Inclusivity.” Of her 360-degree program impact, she says, “It’s a passion for constant improvement. And it’s extraordinarily gratifying to use my academic and professional background to make the MBS experience more meaningful and valuable to all.”

Onward and Upward—We’re Growing!

Our amazing growth in 2021 laid the groundwork for some exciting new offerings in 2022, including a brand-new concentration in Product Design, which will officially commence in summer 2022 and is the first degree in product design offered at Rutgers University. Drawing on our strength in regulatory, this spring we began offering Alcoholic Beverage Regulation: Wines, Beers, and Spirits (Course #: 16-137:601), which ties into our Food Science and Global Food Technology and Innovation concentrations. Stay tuned for additional academic expansions!

The MBS Virtual Book Club

The MBS Virtual Book Club—conceptualized by Kathleen Cashman-Walter and Beth Ann Murphy, Ph.D.—held its first meeting on March 25, during Women’s History Month, with the inaugural book themed accordingly. Believe It: How to Go From Underestimated to Unstoppable, by innovator Jamie Kern Lima, serves as a vivid reminder that entrepreneurial success does not come easy, as Kern Lima details the multiple rejections, personal struggles, and very low lows she endured in the effort to bring her revolutionary product from concept to market. Open to all MBS students, alumni, faculty, and staff, the MBS Book Club features a different student-selected topic with each new book.

Writing Workshop for STEM Professionals

One of the greatest determinants of career success is the ability to communicate ideas clearly—especially in today’s digital world. This fall, Rutgers MBS offered a free three-part workshop highlighting the fundamentals of effective written communication—helping students hone their messaging in a way that’s clear, concise, and that quickly illuminates the value of the information they’re presenting. There was also a review of professional “Don’ts.”

The Best of MBS Newsletter

Since 2006, The Best of MBS Newsletter from MBS.RUTGERS.EDU has been the most trusted source for news, stories, and updates about the MBS community. Featured in this issue:

- Expert Advice, Given Twice: Winter & Fall Industrial Advisory Board (IAB) Mixers
- The MBS Virtual Book Club
- Writing Workshop for STEM Professionals
- Onward and Upward—We’re Growing!
- The Epitome of Excellence
- The Best of MBS Newsletter
OUT OF THIS WORLD - MBS VIRTUAL HOLIDAY EVENT

On December 13, MBS students, alumni, faculty, and staff from near and far gathered for some end-of-semester cheer at the Virtual MBS Holiday Celebration—held via the interactive and VERY fun virtual platform Gather (c/o Gather). The evening was packed with activities, games, prizes, and surprises including hidden gifts and a hidden escape room. Gather provided a creative, fun way for students to connect and celebrate; Gather may also have provided a glimpse of what a metaverse may look like.

The MBS In-Person, Outdoor Holiday Mingle

After three successful outdoor events held earlier this fall, MBS staff decided to go 4/4 with the December 16, 2021 MBS Outdoor Holiday Mingle. Held under a heated tent, the event was (literally) a success like no other, with lots of fun, food, and a great turnout for the last event of the year. “You never know what’ll happen until you try,” said executive director Deborah Silver, Ph.D., of pushing forward with event plans that started in October. “Never be afraid to take a well-planned, thoughtful, and calculated risk. Just make sure you have a parachute, a Plan B, and, in this case, a heated tent!”

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