Dear Alumni and Friends,

“Are we providing students with the knowledge, tools, and practice they need to be successful business professionals and leaders?” That is the question we have been researching this academic year. We have involved our major stakeholder groups. So far, our feedback suggests we are doing a lot of things right. We also have identified some challenges and opportunities we will address in the coming months to make the preparation of our students even stronger.

Evidence of how well we are already doing is the success of our students in external competitions ranging from investments to information systems to professional sales, just to name a few. Additionally, this year, our own Jackson-Rainey Business Plan Competition was the best one yet. The winning team, Genesis Water Restoration, proposed a company that would manufacture a machine to clean waste water from hydraulic fracturing onsite. This group demonstrated well the value of our COB 300 (integrated course) experience for our students.

To further enhance the preparation of our students, this spring we welcomed our first Director of Experiential Learning, Samantha “Sam” Collier. Sam joined us from a similar role at Rutgers and is helping us develop a signature four-year professional development program for our undergrads in conjunction with Associate Dean Molly Brown. Their leadership in this endeavor will help to ensure our undergraduate program is providing the same experiences to our students as those provided by other top business schools. You will be hearing more about this exciting initiative in the coming months.

We are saying goodbye this spring to one of the members of our “dean team” in the CoB. Rick Mathieu, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, has accepted the position of Dean of the McColl School of Business at Queens University in Charlotte, North Carolina, and will be leaving us this summer. We wish Rick all the best. We are doing an internal search for his replacement and will be making an announcement soon.

Thank you for all you continue to do to make the College of Business at JMU one of the top business programs in the country! The best is yet to come.

Regards,

Mary A. Dowan

Dean and Kenneth R. Bartee Endowed Professor