The Dividend

Accounting Department Newsletter



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Message from the President

As president of the University, I am pleased to be a part of the second issue of the *Dividend*. I want to thank each of you in the Department of Accounting for your outstanding accomplishments and your dedication during my tenure at MTSU. As you know, there are three main areas of focus for the University: strengthening academic quality, forging partnerships with business and industry, and creating

a student-centered environment.

Through great teamwork by the Accounting Department's faculty and staff, these goals have successfully been incorporated into the mission of the department. Over the past few years, this department has acquired national recognition and produced graduates of the highest quality. Mentoring and fostering relationships with your alumni

is of utmost importance to the continued growth and success of the department. I want to personally thank Dean Jim Burton and Department Chair Paula Thomas for their superior leadership. I encourage each of you to keep up the good work, and thank you for all you do for MTSU.

Sidney A. McPhee President

MS Program Update

Our Master of Science (M.S.) in Accounting program continues to flourish, experiencing growth in both quantity and quality of students enrolled. Many accounting undergraduate students are taking advantage of our graduate program to complete the 150-hour requirement necessary to sit for the CPA exam and enhance their resumes. Our M.S. program offers the added advantage of helping students build the information systems skills so vital to today's accounting profession. Many undergraduates not from accounting fields are also entering the program. They are preparing for certification and careers in accounting in response to increased media coverage of the profession and the proliferation of employment opportunities afforded by the Sarbanes-Oxley Act.

In 2005 the Accounting
Department established an
Alumni Day M.S. Scholarship to
further stimulate growth in our
master's program. In recognition of limited funding opportunities for graduate students, we
expect to distribute \$1,500
each to three or four deserving
students entering the M.S. pro-

gram each fall. If you or your firm would be interested in sponsoring additional scholarship opportunities for our graduate students or supporting our program in any other way, please contact Dr. Kevin James, the graduate program coordinator, at (615) 898-2355 or kjames@mtsu.edu.

e are proud to announce the following 2005

graduates of our M.S. program:

Ibrahim M. Alasadi

William K. Dark

Rebecca A. Foote

Jennifer L. Gregory

Latoya D. Harrell

Alpha S. Inglis

Bartley L. Isbell

Demaro R. Isom

Jeffrey A. Jones

Kendall R. Joseph

Amanda F. Rice

Michael L. Smith

Christie M. Victor

Kelly L. Webb

Dean's Greeting

Can a CPA Firm Protect Itself Against Competition?

In a surprising decision last summer, Murfreesboro Medical Clinic, P.A. v. Udom, 166 S.W.3d 674 (Tenn. 06/29/2005), the Tennessee Supreme Court held that physicians' covenants not to compete are unenforceable and void in Tennessee unless prescribed by statute. As the court previously disallowed non-compete restrictions against lawyers, they ruled similarly against physicians, stating, "We conclude that non-compete agreements such as the one at issue in the present case are inimical to public policy and unenforceable."

In the wake of the Udom decision, can and should CPA firms have non-compete agreements? It is wise to protect a CPA firm's proprietary information and client base. In general, covenants not to compete are disfavored, but for now covenants that protect a legitimate business interest that are reasonable in scope and duration are enforceable against accountants. Determining "reasonable" is a challenge. A firm needs to consult with knowledgeable legal counsel to carefully consider and draft all of the provisions.

Taking a cue from the preceding cases, an employer is more likely to have a non-compete enforced if:

The scope of the non-compete is not overly broad MMC informed Dr. Udom he could not work in jobs that did not

It is a pleasure to have this opportunity to once again address you in the Jennings A. Jones College of Business Accounting Department newsletter. Jones College continues to grow. With almost 130 full-time faculty members, the college has one of the largest faculties of business in the country, producing 43,700 student credit hours for the fall semester of 2005. And as fast as MTSU has been growing, the rate of growth for Jones College has been in excess of 1.5 times that of the University as a whole over the past six years.

But improving the quality of the education our students receive, not increasing the number of students, is our premier goal. In fact, we have developed a new set of entrance requirements for Jones College, which we expect to implement with the completion of a new administrative software system. We believe these requirements will, over time, be a key element in our strategic plan to continuously improve the quality of the graduates leaving us for the marketplace.

We expect to hold the numbers of undergraduate students in Jones College relatively constant over the coming years and to put increasing emphasis on our existing (and perhaps new) graduate programs—particularly as we work closely with

some of our campus partners such as Recording Industry, Aerospace, and Concrete Industry Management.

As difficult as it may be to believe, we are beginning to run out of room in the "new" Business and Aerospace Building. By next fall, we expect to have every available office in our area occupied by a Jones College faculty member—including several closets that have been converted to offices.

The Accounting Department is a cornerstone of Jones College. One of my dean colleagues recently said, "Virtually every great business school has a great accounting department." We are very proud of the integral part your Accounting Department plays in the success of the college.

We have an outstanding accounting faculty and we are pleased that its most recent additions seek to continue and improve upon the tradition of student-centered excellence. Our accounting students excel on each of our exit measures. Jones College and the Accounting Department have achieved much. But there is much to do. We need your support! To realize our aspirations we must have private support from our alumni and friends.



If you have employment or internship opportunities, remember our students. As a professor of accounting and dean of the college, I ask you to consider making a gift to support scholarships, research, and faculty excellence. The Accounting Department of the Jennings A. Jones College of Business at MTSU needs and deserves your investment.

E. James Burton Ph.D., CPA, CFE Dean, Jennings A. Jones College of Business

Chair's Letter



As accountants, we have long understood the importance of accounting and financial reporting to the U.S. economy's health. News headlines continue to remind the rest of the population about the significance of our work, and Sarbanes-Oxley has legislated broad, sweeping changes in both corporate governance and the auditor's role. Though large corporate scandals grab the headlines, private companies also face increased challenges. Small companies have voiced frustration over complex accounting pronouncements, particularly the FASB's trend toward fair value reporting and the value of the resulting information for their financial statement users. In response to these and related concerns, the American Institute

of CPAs is working with the FASB to consider potential changes in recognition, measurement, and disclosure from GAAP currently applied by public companies. My role on the AICPA's board of directors allows me to actively participate in this process, and I believe that current efforts will have significant ramifications for years to come. Clearly, our profession is dynamic, and MTSU's Department of Accounting continues to attract and prepare students for successful accounting careers.

We are proud to be recognized among an elite group of only 168 AACSB separately accredited accounting programs in the world. We are committed to continuous improvement in all aspects of

our program. Please stay in touch with us, and let us know what you're doing. Tell us what we did well to prepare you for your career, and where we can improve. We have lots of exciting things happening here, and we invite you to continue being a part of our program.

Sincerely,
Paula B. Thomas
Chair and Advisory Board
Distinguished Professor of
Accounting

directly compete. This is overly broad: only prohibit work that competes with the firm.

The geographical area is reasonable

MMC had a 25-mile radius. That may be too far depending on your client base. Don't go beyond the area truly serviced by the firm.

The time limit is reasonable Over one to two years may be unreasonable unless it is part of a practice sale.

The interests of the client are considered

Courts consider the impact on the public interest and harm to others. With less than 20 days before his contract was to expire, MMC advised Dr. Udom that it would not renew his contract and that it would enforce his noncompete. Make reasonable provisions for transfer of files and notice to clients of a departing employee.

No matter the facts, it is possible that a case involving accountants reaching the Tennessee Supreme Court in the future could establish that there is no practical difference between doctors, lawyers, and accountants, thus rendering non-competes for accountants unenforceable. Until that time, implement only carefully drafted, evenly applied, and reasonable non-compete covenants in consultation with your attorney.

Jennings A. Jones College of Business conduct a major field test at the conclusion of each semester. This assessment focuses on general business knowledge retained by graduating seniors. The results of the fall 2005 major field test show that the MTSU Department of Accounting was the only department in the college to score above the national group on six of eight assessment indicators. The department has received this award each year since its inception in 1997–1998.

FacultyHighlights

Department of Accounting Faculty

Years in parentheses indicate first appointment to a position at MTSU.

Patricia A. Blankenship Instructor (2004)

Larry D. Brandon
Assistant Professor (1986)

Daniel E. Braswell
Assistant Professor (2002)

E. James Burton Professor; Dean, Jennings A. Jones College of Business (1990)

James L. Bush Associate Professor (1985)

Robert G. Colvard Professor (1978)

Laura Womack Daniel Professor (1983)

Monia Davis Instructor (2005)

Sarah C. Dawkins Associate Professor (1987)

Rebecca R. Foote Instructor (2006)

Larry E. Farmer Professor (1980)

Betty S. Harper Professor (1972)

J. Phillip Harper Associate Professor (1966)

continued on page 7

Paula Thomas received a one-year appointment to the AICPA audit committee while serving her second year as a member of the AICPA board of directors.

Lara Womack Daniel was promoted to full professor and returned to our department as a full-time faculty member after serving as interim associate dean of the Honors College for one year.

Tim Koski was granted tenure.

John Wermert received the Outstanding Achievement in Instructional Technology Award at fall convocation in August. The University-wide award recognizes those who have demonstrated excellence in the development of technology-based teaching materials and in the integration of instructional technology in the classroom.

Robert (Smitty) Smith was honored with a two-year appointment to the Governmental Accounting Standards Advisory Council (GASAC), an advisory group to the Governmental Accounting Standards Board, which is the body responsible for establishing and improving financial accounting and reporting standards for state and local governments.

Charles Kile was instrumental in scheduling Stephen Biggar, director of U.S. equity research for Standard & Poor's, as an on-campus guest speaker. Biggar delivered an interesting presentation on his involvement in the equity market to a large crowd of faculty and students on March 28

Bob Colvard celebrated his 40th year as a member of the AICPA.

New Faculty

The Accounting Department is pleased to announce the addition of Monica Davis and Rebecca Foote to the faculty on annual appointments.

Rebecca Foote received her M.S. in Accounting/ Information Systems from MTSU in 2005, graduating summa cum laude. She graduated cum laude from Ohio State University in 1982. She obtained CPA certification in 2004. Rebecca has held positions at Solo Cup Company's headquarters in Urbana, Illinois, at Toyota Motor Manufacturing in Kentucky, and at Dempsey, Vantrease & Follis, a Murfreesboro public accounting firm. She Rebecca came to MTSU in spring 2006 to teach Principles of Accounting II and Managerial Accounting.

Monica Davis graduated with highest honors in 1986 from Auburn University with a degree in accounting. She completed her master's degree and earned CPA certification in 1987. Monica has taught at Auburn and worked for Arthur Anderson in Sarasota, Florida. She joined MTSU at the beginning of the academic year to teach Principles of Accounting I and

Survey of Accounting for General Business.

The Business Law faculty is proud to announce the addition of Pat Blankenship and Sandy Benson to its ranks.

Pat Blankenship received her J.D. in 1977 from the University of Tennessee College of Law. She became a full-time instructor in 2004. Pat is managing attorney for Blankenship and Blankenship in Murfreesboro. She has managed and participated in several businesses and is now chief manager for Blankenship Investment Group. She is also an experienced presenter at conferences and workshops regarding continuing legal education and business entities.

Sandy Benson holds a bachelor's degree from Vanderbilt University, where she graduated summa cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa. Sandy graduated as valedictorian from the University of Georgia School of Law in 1990. She is the owner of Sandy Benson and Associates of Murfreesboro. Sandy is the sole attorney endorsed by the Tennessee Medical Association (TMA) to review managed care contracts for all TMA physicians. She writes on medicine and law and speaks on business and health care law to a variety of professional audiences. Sandy taught as an adjunct professor at MTSU in the fall of 2005 and is now teaching both Commercial Law and Legal Environment of Business.

Accounting Alumni Appreciation Day

Our 2006 Accounting Alumni Appreciation Day was held on April 27 with more than 100 alumni and friends in attendance. We enjoyed informative and interesting presentations from Dennis Dycus, director of municipal audit for the state of Tennessee: Jim Wilson of Wilson and Wilson; Dave Stacey of Ameriprise Financial Services; Rick Murray of Capital Bank and Trust; and Jennifer Pollard of the Internal Revenue Service as well as several of our own faculty members. The weather cooperated this year so we were able to

We want to extend our sincere thanks to all those who took time away from the office this year to enjoy this event with us. We hope everyone will mark their

calendars for our next Accounting Alumni Appreciation Day tentatively scheduled for April 26, 2007.





enjoy lunch outdoors under a large tent set up next to the Business and Aerospace Building. Attendees enjoyed the opportunity to expand their professional knowledge, rekindle old friendships, and expand their networking contacts.



What's an accounting degree worth?

The average starting salary for 2006 college graduates with an accounting degree is \$45,723—up 6.2% from last year.

Source: National Association of Colleges and Employers

Are accounting graduates favorably recruited for entry-level management positions?

A survey of business school graduate recruiters finds empirical evidence to support the idea that accounting majors are significantly preferred over general business majors for general entry-level management positions. Furthermore, this survey also

Furthermore, this survey also revealed that accounting majors with a B.B.A. received a higher mean recruitment rating than students with M.B.A. degrees who had general business as an undergraduate major.

Source: Management Accounting Quarterly, Spring 2004, W. Mark Wilder and Morris H. Stocks

Alumni DayProgram

Thursday, April 27, 2006

Changing Opportunities

"Many years ago accountants were seen as simply the 'bean counters." Today, that's changed dramatically. You not only need to know your stuff, that is GAAP, you need to be conversant in internal controls - and today more organizations see accountants in the finance function as their business partners. They're asking them for advice, not just about debits and credits, but how should a process be organized, how should it be run, where does it stop and start. The accountant's role is much broader than it's ever been before."

-Robert Hirth, managing director and internal audit leader, Protiviti

1:40-1:45

1:45-2:35

2:35-2:55

2:55-3:45

3:45-3:50

3:50-4:40

4:40

Identity Theft

Bob Colvard

East Lobby

tax update

Tim Koski

FASB update

Larry Farmer

East Lobby

Federal income

Thuisday, 1	April 21, 200	0.		
7:30-8:00	East Lobby	Registration and morning	g coffee	
8:00-8:10	State Farm Room	Welcome (Dean Burton, Paula Thomas, Alumni Office, and Smitty)		
8:10-9:50	State Farm Room	Dennis Dycus, director, Municipal Audit, State of Tennessee My Favorite Frauds		
9:50-10:10	East Lobby	Break		
10:10-11:50	State Farm Room	Jim Wilson, Wilson & Wilson Expert Witnessing: Dos and Don'ts		
11:50-12:50	Barbecue lunch (be sure to sign in again after lunch)			
Break Out Sessions (Location)				
12:50-1:40	State Farm Room	Room 316	Room 308	
	Update on AICPA activities Paula Thomas	Investment and Tax Essentials for CPAs Dave Stacey, Ameriprise Financial Services	To Be Announced Rick Murray, Capital Bank & Trust	

Mini-break to change rooms and speakers only-no beverages

Break

GASB update

and Smitty

Dwayne McSwain

Mini-break to change rooms and speakers only-no beverages

Dwayne McSwain

and Smitty, continued

Sign out and pick up certificates

To Be Announced

Jennifer Pollard, IRS

Rick Murray, continued

Revised Limited Liability

Employment law update

Lara Womack and

Company Act in

Patricia Blankenship

Tennessee

Pat Wall

ProgramNews

Internship Program Update

MTSU accounting internships provide qualified accounting majors with an opportunity to gain first-hand experience in applying accounting theory and techniques to real business and nonprofit situations. An internship is an offcampus learning experience that helps students develop accounting skills, gain relevant work experience, and become acquainted with business professionals. Accounting internship experiences encompass professional-level assignments and responsibilities in CPA firms, industry, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations.

For the past 18 months, the Accounting Department has made a concerted effort to increase both student and employer awareness of the internship program. More than 60 firms have been contacted by our department this year in an effort to

increase accounting internship opportunities for our students. These employers have been encouraged to submit internship opportunities to the program coordinator, who then posts these announcements to the departmental Web site and distributes the information to the Accounting faculty for inclass announcements.

This year the department's internship activities received official recognition as an MTSU special program. This designation allows accounting interns to be considered full-time students for financial aid and insurance verification purposes.

This year also marks the department's second annual Resume Writing Workshop and Meet the Corporations Day. Both events are cohosted with the MTSU student chapter of the Institute of Management Accountants and the MTSU Career and Employment Center. These events are specifically designed to assist MTSU

accounting students seeking employment in corporate and government environments. Twelve employers participated in Meet the Corporations Day to provide students with invaluable networking opportunities with important executives in the region, and sixteen students took advantage of the Resume Writing Workshop.

When possible, the department coordinates activities with the cooperative education program to help provide students with the best learning experience.

Continuing a long-standing tradition, the accounting internship program enhances students' classroom knowledge with real-world experience in the accounting profession. Employers who would like to participate in our internship program are encouraged to contact Dr. Dwayne McSwain at dmcswain@mtsu.edu or (615) 898-2347.

continued from page 4

Jeannie J. Harrington Associate Professor (1994)

Kevin L. James Assistant Professor (2000)

Horace E. Johns Professor (1983)

Charles O. Kile Jr. Assistant Professor (2003)

Timothy R. Koski Associate Professor (2002)

Denise M. Leggett Instructor (2003)

Dwayne N. McSwain Assistant Professor (2003)

Melanie D. Nichols Secretary (2004)

Mary E. Phillips Assistant Professor (2004)

Daniel L. Reynolds Professor (1974)

Violet B. Rigsby Secretary (1983)

G. Robert Smith Jr. Associate Professor (1999)

Paula B. Thomas Chair, Accounting Advisory Board Distinguished Professor (1983)

Patricia S. Wall Assistant Professor (2003)

Terry J. Ward Professor (1994)

Margaret C. Weatherford Instructor (2002)

John G. Wermert Assistant Professor (2002)

Harold O. Wilson Professor (1983)

he following students took advantage of internship opportunities:

Term Summer 2005	Student Michael Hood Mustafa Nateqi Li Zhu	Company Hospital Corporation of America (HCA) McKendree Village, Inc. Bridgestone/Firestone North America Tire, LLC
Fall 2005	Becky Bratcher	Bratcher, Horton & Associates
Spring 2006	Diane Bain Ben Brooks Michael Hinote Lisa Hutcheson	Winnett Associates, PLLC Crowe Chizek and Company, LLC Crowe Chizek and Company, LLC KraftCPAs, PLLC

CourseInformation

2005 Scholarship Recipients

Accounting Alumni Day High Scholastic Award

\$750

Julie D. Drumm

Accounting Alumni Day Service Award

\$750

John L. Baker

Alumni Day MS Scholarship

Allison L. Reynolds Pooja Trehan

Crowe Chizek and Company Outstanding Accounting Student Scholarship

\$1000

Hollie S. McGriff

New Courses

ACTG 6100 Accounting and Legal Issues for Managers

This course surveys business skills necessary for managers without undergraduate business degrees to enter the business world. The course focuses on helping students with nonbusiness backgrounds acquire sufficient training in accounting and common legal issues to prepare them to enter careers in business.

This three-credit-hour course is one of the core courses in the new Master of Science in Professional Science degree offered by the College of Basic and Applied Sciences. This degree has been designed to enhance the interface between science and business by providing strong training emphasizing expertise in both of these areas. ACTG 6100 is open to other interested graduate students; however, it will not meet the requirements for the M.S. in Accounting/ Information Systems nor the M.B.A. program.

Pat Wall, as both a CPA and an attorney, used her expertise in both fields to develop the curriculum for this course. She also served as instructor for the initial offering of this course in fall 2005. The department plans to offer this course each fall.

ACTG 6920 Financial Statement Analysis Beginning in spring 2006,

the Department of Accounting is offering a new course for MBA students: Financial Statement Analysis. The course is designed to give students a financial accounting foundation and hands-on experience in analyzing financial statements with a view toward determining security valuation. The course will introduce students to a number of analysts' valuation models and will afford students the opportunity to apply these models in a final course

project.

M.B.A. students will be able to take ACTG 6920 to satisfy the accounting coursework requirement for the M.B.A. degree; however, this course is not open to students with undergraduate majors in accounting. It is a three-credit-hour course that has ACTG 2120 (Principles of Accounting II) as a prerequisite. The department currently plans to offer this course each spring semester.

Charles Kile used his research in the field of financial accounting to develop the content of this new course and teach the inaugural offering.

New Mission Statements

At the beginning of the 2005–2006 academic year, a faculty committee was charged with reviewing the department mission state-

ments for both the B.B.A. and M.S. programs and recommending changes as needed. After much thoughtful consideration, the committee presented some ideas at the fall faculty meeting, and all faculty members participated to develop the following new mission statements.

Undergraduate

The mission of the Department of Accounting is to provide students with a learning experience in accounting and business law that offers technical competencies, critical thinking applications, opportunities for intellectual inquiry, and exposure to professional career opportunities.

Graduate

The mission of the graduate program is to provide a flexible and focused learning experience that builds on the undergraduate education to prepare students for professional careers in accounting and other related fields. This program also supports students who aspire to obtain professional accounting certifications.

We are confident these statements reflect the department's goals and priorities in view of the accounting environment we are preparing our students to enter. We are considering curriculum revisions to support these new mission statements.

StudentOrganizations

IMA Corner

The student IMA chapter continues to be involved in many activities. This year we have nine new members. Our meeting speakers last fall included Kelly Chambers Myers, chief financial officer, Lojac Construction Company; Pat Evans, Nashville IMA president and manager, LBMC Outsourcing; Sharon Fields, vice president, Ingram Book Company; Felicia Demos, controller, Demos' Restaurants: Tom Sloan, controller, Amsurg; and Greg Godwin, senior financial analyst, Doane Pet Care.

This spring our speakers include Dennis Dycus, director of municipal audit, Comptroller's Office, State of Tennessee; Norma Thomas, national recruiter, Internal Revenue Service; Olga and Michael Reeves, internal auditors with Hospital Corporation of America; Ilaine Newby, cost accountant, Tridon Inc.; and John McKinney, head of accounting, National HealthCare Company.

In addition to meetings, two of our students attended the joint IMA/TSCPA meeting in Cool Springs and met several interesting people.

We were fortunate to send our fall chapter president, Candace Austin, to the IMA Student Leadership Conference at Orlando in November. Over 400 students were addressed by international business leaders at this conference.

Also in the fall, our chapter took the plant tour at Ingram Book Company in La Vergne. It is a fascinating operation! We thank Sharon Fields for this wonderful opportunity.

Finally, the IMA student chapter is hosted the second annual Meet the Corporate Firms Recruiting Gala on March 23 from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. in the Jackson Building (Alumni Center).

We look forward to a wonderful and active 2006!

Jeannie Johnson Harrington IMA Faculty Advisor

What's Going on with Beta Alpha Psi?

Beta Alpha Psi had another successful year. For the third spring in a row (2005), the fraternity's service project was working with Stones River National Battlefield on non-native plant removal and grass planting. We had a highly successful Meet the Firms event in the fall with more companies in attendance than ever before. This success rolled over into the fall Beat the Firms golf outing. Once again, the faculty team failed to finish in the top three, but are getting better.

The fraternity still meets on a regular basis (usually Tuesday afternoons), and we thank all the firms and other organizations that have sent speakers, including KraftCPAs, Ernst & Young, KPMG, Deloitte, the Tennessee Comptroller's Office, Decosimo, HCA, NHC, IRS, and a host of others, G. Robert Smith Jr. continues as the faculty advisor with outstanding assistance from Dwayne McSwain and all the student members of the organization. The presidents for the last year were John Baker (spring 2005), Justin Epley (fall 2006), and Lee Dodson (spring 2006). Our president-elect for fall 2006 is Jon Miller.

Wink Midgett Accounting Scholarship

\$1,500

Rebecca A. Bowman Rachel E. Cheek Leah N. Smith

W. Wallace Robertson Scholarship

\$1,000

Benjamin J. Brooks Melissa M. Leffel Lindsay M. Edmunds Ronnie H. Pham

Presenters for these scholarship awards were Paula Thomas (Accounting Department chair), Denise Leggett, and Pat Wall.

TSCPA Scholarship

Ben Brooks



(I to r) Larry Morton, Connie Bailey, Jeff Smith, the late Joel Jobe, Dennis Dycas, Tommy Francis, Paula Thomas, and Bubba Dempsey.

Advisory Board Notes

To allow Advisory Board members to become better acquainted with our faculty, faculty members have attended board meetings to discuss how they conduct classes and what activities they require of students. The board hosted a reception for the Accounting Department faculty following a meeting with Beta Alpha Psi students at the end of the semester.

Accounting Advisory Board

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Accounting Department

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