

# BCEN Perspectives

Department of Business Communication and Entrepreneurship—Middle Tennessee State University—Spring 2012

## Chairperson's Corner

Dr. Stephen Lewis, Professor & Department Chair

### We've Always Done It That Way!



How many times have we heard or used the expression, “We’ve always done it that way”? Change is often difficult to accept. Unlearning the old may be more difficult than learning the new. For me, at least, that is the case. I keep wondering,

for example, why the computer software processes have to change from one version to another. The newer process doesn’t necessarily seem any more efficient.

As I write this, I have just perused the February 2012 issue of the *Business Education Form*, which spotlights change. Is there any subject area where change takes place more rapidly than in business, and particularly business education? I often wonder what it’s like to teach history. Are history teachers challenged by changes in their field? Modern history, certainly, experiences change. What about math teachers? Or chemistry? Has the periodic table changed all that much since I took chemistry in high school? (Don’t answer—that’s a rhetorical question!)

A June 1975 article in *BusinessWeek* explored “The Office of the Future” (available at [http://www.businessweek.com/technology/content/may2008/tc20080526\\_547942.htm](http://www.businessweek.com/technology/content/may2008/tc20080526_547942.htm)). I recall reading the article and marveling at the changes that were in store for offices. Interestingly, this office of the

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future was to arrive in the 1990s. A fascinating comment in the article was that offices had changed little since the invention of the typewriter. Many of you remember, as I remember, teaching typewriting, shorthand, and other business subjects where the primary tool was a typewriter; not much changed from year to year. However, once personal computers and their accompanying software were introduced, offices began to evolve rapidly. Now we just expect that software versions will change every year or two with updates arriving even more often.

In recent years technology changes have increased in a geometric fashion with no sign of slowing down. As a result, business teachers will be challenged to stay current so that each generation of students is equipped to interact in an increasingly global environment. I’m confident that we will meet the challenge.

By the way, is “Au” still the symbol for gold?



# Alumni Spotlight



Already equipped with a BS degree in agricultural education from Southern University and A&M College, Karva Jones received her MBE in Training and Development from MTSU in December of 2009. Having

previously worked as a high school agricultural teacher in Bartlett, TN and as a corporate trainer at a regional bank in Ridgeland, Mississippi, Karva chose to pursue her MBE degree to solidify her transition from the public teaching field to the corporate training world.

While pursuing her graduate degree at MTSU, Karva worked as a graduate assistant in the BCEN Department assisting in the instruction of online undergraduate course and conducting research in the area of educational technology. She also gained hands-on experience using cutting-edge technology currently being applied in the corporate training world. While earning her degree, Karva learned to work effectively in a team environment which she admits was a challenge initially. However, that experience ultimately prepared her to be successful in her current position which is in a very team-oriented environment.

Currently, Karva serves as a training and development specialist at Health IT Services Group (HITSG), a wholly owned, subsidiary of Fresenius Medical Care North America where she conducts web-based and on-site training sessions for HITSG

clients and internal staff. She also assists in creating and designing web-based courses, documentation, and on-demand recorded sessions for her clients. When asked how her MBE degree has helped in her career, Karva states, “Having the MBE degree has afforded me many opportunities to interview for training positions that I would not otherwise have had. Employers realize that I have the foundational knowledge to be successful in their training department. The skills and experience I gained prepared me to meet any challenge that my corporate training position has presented thus far.”

For those considering a graduate degree in training and development, Karva recommends having a plan for achieving career goals. Also realizing that you only get out of any program what you are willing to put into it is vital. “Success demands sacrifice, hard

work, and commitment—be prepared to give of

these freely,” suggests Karva. Taking advantage of professional networking opportunities prior, during, and after graduation is also critical. Karva

advises, “Join your local ASTD and/or SHRM

chapter to begin fostering relationships

with those in the

industry in your area. Your

next great training opportunity could only be a smile and a firm handshake away.”

“Success demands sacrifice, hard work, and commitment—be prepared to give of these freely.”

*Karva currently resides in Nolensville with her wonderful husband, Sam, and their beautiful, 7-year old son, Alex. Along with being active in a variety of professional and cultural organizations, Karva enjoys reading, traveling and culinary exploration in her spare time.*

# Faculty Focus



**Dr. Robert B. Blair** serves as President-Elect of the National Association of Business Teacher Education (NABTE), is Southern Business Education Association (SBEA) Director of the National

Business Education Association (NBEA), and is Chairperson of the NBEA Leadership Awards Administrative Committee. Dr. Blair presented “Instructional Supervision: Method or Mayhem” at the NBEA 2011 Convention and co-presented “NBEA Academy for Leadership Excellence” at the 2011 and 2012 NBEA Convention.



**Dr. Patrick Geho**, through his work with the Tennessee Small Business Development Center, secured a \$2.1 million for business development activities across the state and funded ten

entrepreneurship internships for the BCEN department. He authored an article, “Commercial real estate (CRE) market – next meltdown or recovery on the way?” for publication in the *Research in Business and Economics Journal*.



**Dr. Virginia Hemby** published a chapter in the NBEA 2011 Yearbook entitled, “Online Learners and Students’ Learning Styles.” She presented “The New Mac Attack: Has

Increased Popularity of iPads and iPhones made Apple Ripe for the Picking?” at the 2012 NBEA Convention and also presented at the 2011 Delta Pi Epsilon (DPE) National Conference and the TCTE Conference. Dr. Hemby is serving as a reviewer for several journals including *JARBI*, *DPE*, *Business Communication Quarterly*, and the *NBEA 2012 Yearbook*. She is also the technology section editor for the *Business Education Forum*.



**Dr. Ronda Henderson** co-authored an article, “Perception Differences of Business Educators Regarding Mobile Phone Distractions in the Classroom Based on Academic Rank” in the *Business Teacher Education Journal*

(formerly *NABTE Review*) and another in the 2011 *NBEA Yearbook* entitled “Preparing to teach online: What you need to know.” Two other manuscripts were published in the *Georgia Business Education Journal* and the *Kentucky Business Education Journal*. Dr. Henderson was recently featured in the MTSU Communicator newsletter at <http://www.mtsu.edu/communicator/MarchApril2012Communicator.pdf>



**Dr. Sherry Roberts** recently completed her term on the SBEA Executive Board as Past President and currently serves as President-Elect of the Tennessee Business Education Association (TBEA). She serves on the

NBEA Technology Committee where she co-developed NBEAConnect.Ning.com and presented two technology sessions at the 2012 NBEA Convention in Boston. She also presented a webinar on financial literacy for NBEA. Dr. Roberts co-authored (with **Dr. Vincent Smith**) an article, “Transitioning from F2F Teaching Environment to Online Teaching Environment,” in the *Kentucky Business Education Journal*.



**Dr. Wayne Rollins** published an article in the December 2011 issue of the *Business Education Forum* entitled “Realistic Personal Finance for Today’s Students” and co-authored (with **Dr. Stephen D.**

**Lewis**), “Communication Practices of Certified Public Accountants,” in the Fall 2011 issue of the *Academy of Organizational Culture, Communications & Conflict*. He also co-presented (with **Dr. Stephen D. Lewis**) a paper at the 2011 Allied Academies International Conference in Las Vegas entitled “A Comparison of the Readability of



Newspaper Columns Written by National Journalism Award Winners.” Dr. Rollins provided entertainment as a member of the Work In Progress quartet during the 2011TBEA Conference.



**Dr. Vincent W. Smith** serves as President of the Tennessee Business Education Association (TBEA). He co-authored (with **Dr. Sherry Roberts**) an article in the Kentucky Business Education Journal and is the

communication section editor for the Business Education Forum. He is also a conference reviewer for the Delta Pi Epsilon National Publications Committee. He presented “Free and Inexpensive Resources for the Business Technology Teacher” for the 2011 Tennessee Career and Technical Education Conference and “NBEA & TBEA: Why Membership Matters” at the 2012Tennessee Society of Certified Professional Accountants Educators’ Symposium. Dr. Smith recently received the 2011 MTSU Outstanding Achievement in Instructional Technology Award.



**Ms. Dorothy Warren** serves as Advisory Board Member to Business Systems Technology program at Tennessee Technology Center at Murfreesboro and assisted the Tennessee Small Business

Development Center with online instructional videos for entrepreneurs. She recently completed a graduate course at MTSU in leadership and motivation. Ms. Warren co-presented two sessions (with **Ms. Kay Blasingame-Boike**) at the 2012 SBEA Conference in Orlando, FL entitled “Business Students Celebrate Global Entrepreneurship Week” and “Bridging the Experience Gap with Internships.” She also presented on the topic of business ethics at the 2011 TBEA Conference and the Tennessee Career and Technical Education Conference in Murfreesboro.



**Dr. Raholanda White** received a grant from Dr. David Schmidt and the International Affairs Advisory

Committee (IAAC), to participate in an International Faculty Development Seminar: Salvador da Bahia: Identity, Race and Culture in Afro-Brazilian Heartland during May 30-June 15, 2012. MTSU is a member of the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE).

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## Dr. Stephen Lewis Honored



**Dr. Stephen D. Lewis** attended the 2012 NBEA Convention in Boston, Massachusetts and was awarded the 2012 NBEA Supervisor of the Year Award. Dr. Robert B. Blair presented him with the prestigious honor at the NBEA Awards Luncheon.



Select MTSU BCEN faculty members congratulate Dr. Stephen D. Lewis while he displays his award in Boston, Massachusetts on April 6, 2012.

# Student Spotlight

## BCEN Student Teachers



Pictured—**Fall 2011 Student Teachers:** (L-R)-**Lauren Hayes and Anne Reed.**



Pictured—**Spring 2012 Student Teachers:** (L- R) -  
**Michelle Stafford, Jill Roberson, and Shania Willyard.**

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## BCEN Highlights



**Brock Patterson** was a featured keynote speaker at the Southern Business Education Conference in Orlando, Florida in October 2011.



**Businessman Herman Cain** addresses students in conjunction with the Global Entrepreneurship Week events in December 2011.

## Phi Beta Lambda



Pictured—November 2011 Thanksgiving Food Drive: (L-R) PBL Students: Andrew Gentile, Annie Williams, and RoseAnna Lee.

The Lambda Alpha Tau chapter of Phi Beta Lambda (PBL) sponsored its fifth annual community service project in November 2011. The chapter partnered with Rooms at the Inn, a homeless shelter in Murfreesboro, TN. Students were able to provide Thanksgiving food boxes and turkeys to over 15 needy families in the local community!



Fifteen turkeys were delivered to the Rooms at the Inn Shelter in Murfreesboro.

PBL students sponsored fall and spring professional development seminars this year. The fall seminar included Mr. Lynn Edwards, Senior Human Resources Manager from DirecTV Home Services in Tullahoma, TN. Mr. Edwards discussed the importance of career search readiness



Pictured—Mr. Lynn Edwards speaking to MTSU students at the PBL Professional Development Seminar in October 2011.





## Collegiate Entrepreneurs' Organization (CEO)

The MTSU chapter of CEO has been busy learning from many interesting entrepreneur visitors this semester. First, Mr. David English, of English and Associates, joined the group to present on his international entrepreneurship experience in Argentina. A Nashville native, Mr. English moved to Argentina from New York City after the events of 9/11. There, he created a venture to assist foreign manufacturers and other organizations in making investments and securing contracts in Mendoza. He now owns several Mendoza ventures and is planning an entrepreneurship Study Abroad opportunity next year with MTSU. Mr. Beau Noblitt, the owner and operator of the Murfreesboro Chick-Fil-A franchise, visited in March as well, and spoke to students not only about his experience as a Chick-Fil-A franchisee, but also about tenacity, commitment, and always performing one's best. Finally, Mr. Jack Stevens, owner of Stevens Family Tae-Kwon-Do locations, visited the students to discuss forming a creative product and strong brand from within the company.



Pictured: Mr. David English speaks with CEO President Nashdat Khaled and Vice-President April Cofie, while Dr. Tony Johnston from MTSU Agribusiness looks on.

Participation in CEO has increased this semester due to a new structure in which members are interviewed and put through a filter of criteria before being extended membership. As a result, attendance at meetings has improved dramatically, and members are starting to branch out to pursue other activities together, aside from simply attending meetings. Over the summer, the officers intend to continue refining this new strategy to improve the club.

## Sigma Nu Tau National Entrepreneurship Honor Society

Rachel Wilson and Doug Tatum joined forces this year to successfully apply for membership for MTSU in the Sigma Nu Tau National Honor Society. Sigma Nu Tau is an honor society supporting colleges and universities in the U.S. that offer majors, minors, concentrations, or graduate degrees in entrepreneurship. To be selected for Sigma Nu Tau, a university's program must be sizable and must be accredited by a regional accreditation body, as well as provide a letter of support from its Dean.

For a student to be eligible at MTSU, they must have at least junior standing, be an entrepreneurship major, and must have a GPA above 3.2. Students are selected each semester based upon these criteria and pinned in a surprise visit to their classes by an advisor so they may be honored in front of their peers. Annually, the department honors the students in a formal tapping ceremony. Our students will be wearing green and gold honor cords at future graduations, and the first tapping ceremony was held on April 18th at 4:30 pm in the SunTrust Room.

Pictured: Rachel Wilson pins Britanie Knapp during Business



Plan Development as Derek Watson waits for his pin.

Congratulations to the eight students below who were inducted into the society this inaugural year!

- Chandler Arrighi
- Paz Elad
- Skylar Gleaves
- Britanie Knapp
- Amber Richardson
- Christopher Brian Sonney
- Amanda Dawn Vicary
- Derek Watson

# Professor Profile with Dr. Marsha O. Smith



**After over 30+ years of devoted service to MTSU and the BCEN department, what prompted your decision to retire?**

As someone who has worked all their life, it seemed strange to look at retirement. But, several of my friends and

former colleagues who had retired said, “You’ll know when it’s time,” and they were correct. I wanted to spend more time with my family and focus on other things that are important in my life. It just seemed like the right time for me to retire.

**How has the BCEN department changed during your tenure as a faculty member?**

The department has changed over the years in almost every aspect. Of course, there were always new faces on the faculty, sometimes for sad reasons, but many more times because of the growth of the department. The biggest change, as with our entire world, was in technology. Not only did new technology affect us personally, but it also required us to revise and update our entire curriculum. We really had to “hustle” at times to keep our courses current since so much was changing so quickly. Seeing some courses fall to the wayside, such as shorthand, was really hard for many of the faculty. But, the opportunity to add new programs and courses was exciting.

Let me share a short story about shorthand. When I retired, I received a note from a former Chair of the department, Dr. Dalton Drennan, written in shorthand. I could read the note; there are just some things we learn that we never forget. It made me nostalgic for the “simpler” days!

**What do you feel was your greatest accomplishment and/or contribution to this department and/or the university?**

My colleagues could answer this better than I can. But, I think being instrumental in getting the entrepreneurship program started would be my greatest accomplishment/contribution. Let me first say that Dr. Jim Steward, who was a colleague in the department and taught the marketing education courses, was also instrumental in getting the program off the ground. Dr. Steward had been involved in entrepreneurship at the high school level, and he helped bring the entrepreneurship course to MTSU in 1985. After that, he and I worked many long hours, wrote many proposals, and attended many meetings to get approval for the entrepreneurship program. I am proud to say that the entrepreneurship minor for nonbusiness majors was made available to students in 1996. In Fall 2000, the entrepreneurship major was approved, and since then the department has seen a tremendous growth in students majoring and minoring in entrepreneurship. I think this program has truly made a difference in students’ lives beyond the classroom. Many of our graduates have gone on to be successful entrepreneurs, and that makes me very proud.



During my 30+ years at MTSU, I served on many departmental and university committees. But, from my earliest days in the department, I was involved in curriculum development. For about 10 years, I worked on high school curriculum guides in entrepreneurship, business education, and marketing education for the State of Tennessee. It seemed I was always the chair of curriculum committees or writing curriculum for a new course. For many years, I served as the Chair of the Curriculum Committee for the Jennings A. Jones College of Business. During my tenure as Chair, we faced many challenges such as moving into the Business and Aerospace Building and deciding how to update our curriculum to incorporate the technology available to us in the new classrooms. And, most recently, the addition of online courses required us to either revise current curriculum or develop totally new courses. But, my work as a good committee member and my knowledge of curriculum development were probably my biggest contributions.

### **What do you miss the most?**

Believe it or not, I miss the interaction with the students. After all, my purpose for being there was to help students grow and learn, and I miss being a part of that opportunity. And, obviously, I miss my colleagues and the day-to-day discussions with them. I have been fortunate to maintain contact with many of my colleagues, and I am blessed to call them friends.

### **What “words of wisdom” can you provide to your students, colleagues, and/or friends regarding career longevity?**

My “words of wisdom” are really an old-school adage of three basic ideals to live by:

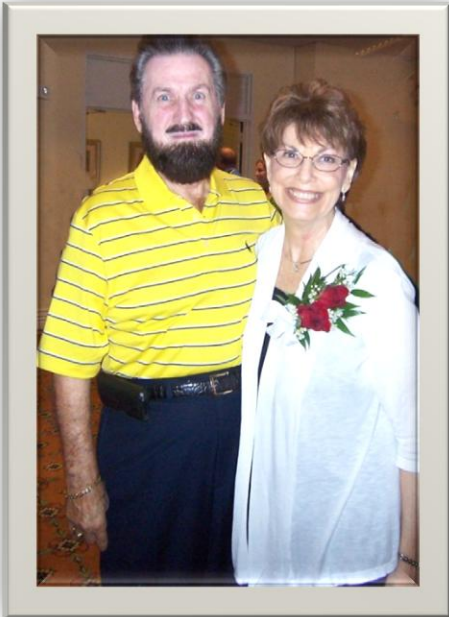
- Attitude is everything
- Maintain integrity in all you do and say
- Treat people right.

I’ve tried to live my life this way and hope I’ve made a difference in someone’s life because of that.



Dr. Marsha O. Smith is currently enjoying her retirement with her beautiful daughters, Gretta Smith and Cora Beth Smith (left picture) and her loving husband, Jim, of over 30 years (right picture.)

# Best Wishes, Dr. Marsha Smith!



**BCEN Professors:** Joe Sawyer  
(Retired) & Marsha Smith



**BCEN Colleagues:** Dorothy Warren, Marsha Smith, & Kay  
Blasingame-Boike



**Supportive Daughters:** Cora Beth & Gretta Smith



**Great Friends:** Marsha Smith & Linda McGrew  
(Retired)

**Retirement Reception held in honor of  
Dr. Marsha O. Smith on August 12, 2011.**

**Department of  
Business Communication  
&  
Entrepreneurship**

**2011-2012 Faculty**

Martha E. Balachandran, Ed.D., professor  
Robert B. Blair, Ph.D., professor  
Kay Blasingame-Boike, M.B.A., instructor  
Dwight Bullard, Ed.D., professor  
Patrick Geho, J.D., associate professor  
K. Virginia Hemby, Ph.D., professor  
Ronda G. Henderson, Ph.D., assistant professor  
William Jackson, instructor  
Stephen D. Lewis, Ph.D., professor and  
department chair  
Sherry Roberts, Ph.D., assistant professor  
Wayne Rollins, Ed.D., associate professor  
Vincent W. Smith, Ed.D., professor  
Doug Tatum, associate professor & Wright  
Travel Chair in Entrepreneurship  
Dorothy Warren, M.B.E., instructor  
Raholanda White, Ph.D., professor  
Rachel Wilson, Ph.D., assistant professor



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MTSU!**

**Click & Learn about our  
BCEN Degree Programs**

**Business Education:** The Business Education major leads to a Bachelor of Science. Students who complete this degree are licensed to teach business and business technology subjects in Grades 7-12.

**Business Education Non-Teaching or Business Education Training and Development:** These two options lead to a Bachelor of Science degree with a minor in Business Administration.

**Entrepreneurship:** The Entrepreneurship major, which leads to a Bachelor of Business Administration degree, is designed for students interested in starting and running their own business.

**Office Management:** The Office Management major leads to a Bachelor of Business Administration and is designed for students interested in managing the administrative support functions of a business.

**BCEN Minors:** Business Communication, Entrepreneurship, Marketing Education, Office Management

**Master of Business Education (available online):** The graduate program leads to a Master of Business Education where students can teach business subjects at the junior high and secondary levels, technology centers, and community colleges. They can also train individuals in a corporate environment.

**BCEN Communications Committee:** Martha Balachandran, Ronda Henderson (chair), and Dorothy Warren.