

NEWSLETTER

June 2023

Volume 6 No 2

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Message from Dean Nail



I must admit that I write this newsletter introduction with a mix of pride and sadness. Pride due to all of the remarkable achievements of the RCVCUBE family documented in this newsletter. Sadness because this is the last introduction I will write for the newsletter. I have accepted an offer to become the next Provost of the University of Southern Mississippi (USM) later this summer. My dean journey began at USM 15 years ago and ends at UTRGV and RCVCUBE.

As I reflect on my four years at UTRGV, I admire the sense of community, great dedication, and passion of the RCVCUBE family. From day one I felt welcomed and found a college filled with stakeholders holding great aspirations for the future. In my first year the pandemic hit, and it would have been easy for the RCVCUBE family to tamp down those aspirations and merely survive. Instead, this community heightened its aspirations and thrived. I feel incredibly blessed to have been surrounded by wonderful people and such a positive environment. It was so refreshing to hear "What's the best way to do it?" instead of "That's the way we have always done it." This is the attitude that brings forth the great outcomes presented in newsletter after newsletter. And it's the same attitude that will carry forward and allow me to continue bragging on my RCVCUBE family from USM.

Allow me to close this final introduction with my heartfelt appreciation to the RCVCUBE family for their enduring support. A special thanks goes to my executive assistant Rebecca Rodriguez (who really runs the Dean's office) and to Bin Wang for starting this newsletter and Michael Abebe for continuing the updates in great fashion. There is so much activity in RCVCUBE that positively impacts our world that it must be presented with pride!

With much love, respect and V's Up always!

Lance

Faculty Publications

Congratulations to our faculty on their elite and high impact publications!

Elite Publications



Geng Sun
(Assistant Professor of Information Systems)

Sun, G., Strategic Implications of Online Retail Platforms' Membership-Based Free Shipping Programs. **Information Systems Research**. Forthcoming.

Jean-Baptiste Tondji
(Assistant Professor of Economics)



Marku, k., Ocampo, S. & Tondji, J-B. Robust Contracts in Common Agency. **The Rand Journal of Economics**. Forthcoming.

Mahajan, A., Pongou, R., Tondji, J.-B., Supermajority Politics: Equilibrium Range, Policy Diversity, Utilitarian Welfare, and Political Compromise. **European Journal of Operational Research**, 307 (2), 963-974

Faculty Publications

High Impact Publications



Bin Wang (Professor of Information Systems)

Y. Sun, Y. Lu, **B. Wang**, and W. Fan. Like Being There: How the Soft VR Technology Could Change Consumers' Initial Decision-Making. **Computers in Human Behavior**, 146 (September 2023), 107814.



**Jean-Baptiste Tondji
(Assistant Professor of Economics)**

Pongou, R., Tchunte, G., & **Tondji, J. B.** (2023). Optimal interventions in networks during a pandemic. **Journal of population economics**, 36(2), 847-883.



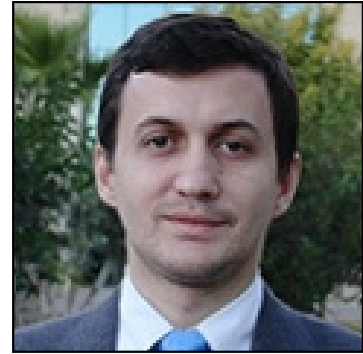
Reto Felix (Associate Professor of Marketing)

von der Au, S., Rauschnabel, P.A., **Felix, R.**, Hinsch, C. (2023). Context in augmented reality marketing: Does the place of use matter? **Psychology & Marketing**. Forthcoming.



Faculty Publications

High Impact Publications



Gautam Hazarika (Associate Professor of Economics)
Maroula Khraiche (Associate Professor of Economics)
Levent Kutlu (Assistant Professor of Economics)

Hazarika, G., Khraiche, M., and Kutlu, L. (2023), Gender Equity in Labor Market Opportunities and Aggregate Technical Efficiency: A Case of Equity Promoting Efficiency. **Applied Economics**. Forthcoming.

Xuan Wang
(Assistant Professor of Information Systems)



Li, Y., **Wang, X.** and Van Slyke, C. (2022), Determinants of online professor reviews: an elaboration likelihood model perspective. In press, **Internet Research**.

Zhu, Q., Dhavale, D., Sarkis, J., **Wang, X.** (2023), Formalizing Organizational Product Deletion through Strategic Cross-Functional Evaluation: A Bayesian Analysis Approach. **International Journal of Production Economics**. Forthcoming.

Faculty Recognitions

Best Paper Award



Congratulations to **Peter Magnusson, Professor and Chair of the Department of Marketing**, for receiving the **2023 S. Tamer Cavusgil Award!**

Professor Magnusson was awarded this prestigious award for his paper titled "Trust Propensity Across Cultures: The Role of Collectivism".

The paper was published in the **Journal of International Marketing** (a high impact journal in RCVCOBE's journal list) in 2022.

Gonzalez Appointed Associate Editor



Congratulations to Jorge Gonzalez, Professor and Chair of the Department of Management, for being appointed as Associate Editor of **Journal of Managerial Psychology**, a high impact journal in RCVCOBE's journal list.

Invitations to join an editorial team from top journals are often offered to faculty who have demonstrated excellent scholarly contributions and service to the journal as peer reviewers.

Abrams tapped to Design Curriculum for Amazon Small Business Academy



Derek Abrams, Associate Professor of Practice in the Department of International Business and Entrepreneurship, was recently invited by the Collegiate Entrepreneurs' Organization (CEO) to help design a new curriculum for Amazon Small Business Academy. The curriculum will provide various online resources for those who aspire to start their own business.

More information about this initiative can be found [here](#). We thank Mr. Abrams for his outstanding service and for representing RCVCOBE and UTRGV well !



Faculty Recognitions

Maria Leonard Won University Award for Sustainability Education



Congratulations to **Maria Leonard, Assistant Professor of Practice** in the Department of Management, for being selected as the recipient of UTRGV's **2023 Faculty Excellence Award for Sustainability Education!** The award recognizes and rewards faculty who contribute to sustainability through their teaching, research/creative works, and service. Maria has been an exceptional faculty advisor and mentor to several student organizations in RCVCOBE . We congratulate Maria on this award and for all she is doing to support the mission of RCVCOBE!

Bin Wang Won University Excellence Award for Service



Congratulations to **Bin Wang, Professor and Chair of the Department of Information Systems**, for being selected as the recipient of UTRGV's **2023 Faculty Excellence Award for Service!** The service excellence award recognizes, encourages, and rewards faculty's service contributions to the university, community, and profession. Professor Wang has served RCVCOBE, UTRGV and her professional community in several leadership capacities over the years. Congratulations to Professor Wang on this award and for all she is doing to support the mission of RCVCOBE!

Azucena Herrera Won Excellence in Online Teaching Award



Congratulations to **Dr. Azucena Herrera, Clinical Assistant Professor in the Department of Management**, for being awarded the **Excellence in Online Teaching Award!** Recipients of this award must have designed and taught one or more online/hybrid courses using well-designed course materials and instructional strategies while demonstrating a rapport with students and effective achievement of desired learning outcomes using best practices.

Congratulations, Dr. Herrera !



Excellence Award Ceremony Held

2022-23 was another successful academic year at the Robert C. Vackar College of Business & Entrepreneurship (RCVCOBE). What better way to wrap up the academic year than with a wonderful college excellence ceremony! On May 11th, we were thrilled to celebrate innovative teaching, excellent scholarship and dedicated service from our faculty. Our staff continue to serve the college with excellence. Our students continue to impress us with their community engagement and leadership outside the classroom.

- **Teaching Excellence Award (Tenured)-Dr. Murad Moqbel**
- **Teaching Excellence Award (Tenure-Track)-Dr. Ahmed Elnahas**
- **Teaching Excellence Award (Non-Tenure Track)-Dr. David Alvarado**
- **Excellence Award in Research-Dr. Nam Nguyen**
- **Excellence Award in Research-Dr. Yejun Zhang**
- **Excellence Award in Service-Dr. Hale Kaynak**
- **Excellence Award in Societal Impact-Dr. Diego Escobari**
- **Excellence Award in Scholarly Leadership-Dr. Peter Magnusson**



2022-23 Faculty Excellence Award Recipients



2022-23 Faculty Excellence Award Recipients

- LINDA ACEVEDO-ACCOUNTANCY
- MARIA LEONARD-MANAGEMENT
- DR. LEVENT KUTLU-ECONOMICS
- DR. AHMED ELNAHAS-FINANCE
- DR. MURAD MOQBEL-INFORMATION SYSTEMS
- DR. CLARA DOWNEY-INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP
- DR. XIAOJING SHENG-MARKETING



2022-23 Staff Excellence Award Recipients

- Staff Excellence Award (Customer Service)-Shana Mettlach
- Staff Excellence Award (Teamwork)-Rebecca Rodriguez
- Staff Excellence Award (Work Ethic)-Nora Ramirez



2022-23 Student Excellence Award Recipients

- Outstanding Undergraduate Student-Leslie Hernandez
- Outstanding Masters Student-Julian Gallegos
- Outstanding PhD Student-Ai Nhan Ngo



Inaugural Hooding Ceremony Held

The inaugural RCVCOBE hooding ceremony was held on May 11th at the University Ballroom in the Edinburg campus. The ceremony was organized to celebrate the graduates of the MBA, MACC, MSBA and MSGC programs in RCVCOBE. It was a wonderful event that recognized and celebrated an important milestone in our graduates' journey. Family and friends attended the celebration. Congratulations to all our graduates! We are proud of you!



Research Spotlight

Bank failures are especially detrimental to small businesses, study found

The recent high profile collapse of Silicon Valley Bank (SVB), Signature Bank and First Republic Bank has raised significant concerns among customers, regulators and investors regarding the stability of the financial system in the United States. Most of the conversation on bank failures (a situation in which a bank is undercapitalized and unable to meet its obligations to depositors and other creditors) generally focus on the adverse impact it has on other banks and their depositors.

Banks play a critical role in the financial system. They take in deposits and use that capital to lend to those in need of credit. How might bank failures affect local credit allocation and small businesses? This question was at the center of a recent study conducted by Salvador Contreras (Professor of Economics and Associate Dean for Graduate and Professional Programs) and his colleagues. In their study titled “Bank failures, local business dynamics, and government policy”, Professor Contreras and his colleagues examined the impact of bank failures on local business formation and job creation.

Their analysis of data from the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) and US Census Bureau from for the period 1994-2014 showed that bank failures have a significant negative impact on local entrepreneurial activity and the labor market. Specifically, the study found that, holding other factors constant, at least one bank failure in a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) reduces net business formation by 475 businesses (16,433 jobs) compared to MSAs that did not experience a bank failure. The negative effect of bank failures is particularly strong for small businesses. Their findings suggest the adverse impact of bank failures on small businesses can be mitigated by targeted government intervention.

The study was published in **Small Business Economics** (a high impact journal in RCVCOBE journal list) in 2022.



Salvador Contreras
Professor of Economics

"We find that the effect of bank failures is the strongest [among] small firms (20 employees or less), suggesting that a decline in local credit supply particularly hurts small firms that are more dependent on bank-firm relationships and bank credit."

News around the College

HOST Program Graduated First Cohort of Students



The Hospitality and Tourism Management program (HOST) at RCVCOBE has graduated its first cohort of students at the end of the spring semester. HOST was launched in Fall 2019.

To recognize this milestone, and congratulate the graduates the College, Department and HOST club organized a private ceremony and mini “commencement.” At the event the Hospitality program Director also recognized and acknowledged the Hospitality Student Club for receiving the 2023 award from the Dean of Students under category, “Member Development,” as fastest growing student club on campus.

At the event, Dr. Jerald Hughes, Associate Dean of Undergraduate studies, draped each student with graduation cords and presented UTRGV memorabilia as a graduation gift. In his remarks, he congratulated the graduates for being the first cohort and UTRGV Hospitality and Tourism ambassadors. He encouraged them to use the foundational business skills they learned to create professional opportunities for themselves and to make a difference in the Hospitality and Tourism sector. In addition, faculty and staff attending the event, shared valuable insights for the recent graduates.

We congratulate the HOST program and its first cohort of students for reaching this important milestone!

News around the College

SOA Held Second Annual Awards Gala



The School of Accountancy (SOA) hosted the **second annual awards gala** at the McAllen Convention Center on May 5th. The gala is organized by Dr. Giorgio Gotti, SOA's director, to recognize outstanding accounting students and celebrate their accomplishments along with their family, faculty and community partners. The event was attended by 170 guests.

During the gala dinner, top undergraduate and graduate SOA students as well as those who received various scholarships were recognized. Additionally, Dr. Giorgio Gotti was honored for being selected as the recipient of **TXCPA Outstanding Accounting Educator award**. Linda Acevedo, Lecturer and Master of Accountancy (MACC) program coordinator, was also honored with the **Faculty of the Year** award. Dr. Gotti would like to especially thank the Becker Professional Education, TXCPA RGV Chapter, SOA Advisory Council and other community partners for their support.

Congratulations to SOA for bringing students, faculty and the community together and for continuing to support student engagement!

News around the College

HOST Students Shine at Global Summit in Switzerland



YHS NEOM Challenge Team 8

Samantha Wagner
Army Ibo
Annie Yuen Ling Ng
Cecilia Adame Puente
Gaby Farah

The Young Hospitality Summit (YHS) is the largest student-run hospitality summit in the world. YHS serves as a platform for industry professionals, media members and student delegates from all over the world to engage in pertinent and insightful discussions on the industry's latest topics every year. YHS offers a unique opportunity for aspiring hospitality industry professionals to network with future and current industry leaders from all parts of the world while broadening their perspectives.

Each year the summit invites student delegates from 40 schools from around the world to Ecole Hôtelière de Lausanne (EHL) campus in Lausanne, Switzerland on a competitive basis. Student delegates represent their respective schools from the Americas, Europe, Asia Pacific, Africa, Middle East and Oceania. This year two UTRGV Hospitality and Tourism Management Program (HOST) students, **Cecilia Adame Puente** and **Valeria Montero** were selected as part of the 80 student global delegation to this prestigious conference.

As part of the three day summit, our students were exposed to keynote speakers and panels presenting and discussing industry relevant topics associated with regenerative development, technological elevation, human connectivity, and participated in roundtable discussions about Academia within the hospitality industry. As part of the conference both Cecilia and Valeria also earned their Certified Hospitality Industry Analytics certificate (CHIA), networked with students from around the world, and worked on a cross cultural challenge project to develop hospitality components of a \$782 Billion future city project in Saudi Arabia.

News around the College

RCVCOBE Faculty Presented at Online Teaching Conference

Two RCVCOBE faculty have participated in the **2023 Excellence in Online Learning Conference** during the spring semester. The conference was organized by UTRGV's Center of Learning and Teaching Technology (COLTT).

Dr. Azucena Herrera (Clinical Assistant Professor) and Martha Lovett (Lecturer), both from the Department of Management, participated in the conference as presenters. Dr. Herrera's presentation was titled "Switch the Traditional Classroom to Virtual International Learning Environments" and discussed her experiences with the Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) and the unique opportunities it provides to learners.

Mrs. Lovett's presentation was titled "SoftChalk: A Fun and Engaging Tool in the Classroom". Her discussion focused on the challenges of creating an engaging online class and how SoftChalk technology in Blackboard can help facilitate student learning and engagement. Mrs. Lovett demonstrated how this technology can help student engagement using her courses.



Azucena Herrera, Ph.D.
Clinical Assistant Professor
Department of Management



Martha Lovett
Lecturer, Department of Management

News around the College

HOST Program and Embassy Suites Partnered to Train Local Youth



Embassy Suites Hotel in McAllen and the Hospitality and Tourism Management (HOST) program at UTRGV collaborated to provide a hospitality operations professional development experience for students from Economedes High School in Edinburg. This was part of the joint effort for community youth outreach, working in conjunction with Ms Sara Perez, Instructor at Economedes.

The program included an overview Hospitality and Tourism Management program at UTRGV, high level view of the global hotel industry, provided by Dr. A.J. Singh, Hospitality Student Club leadership engagement and activities, presented by Shelly Hernandez and Abel Villareal, an in-depth panel discussion with the hotel's executive team, a property tour and Pizza lunch. The executive team that participated in the panel discussion included, Mr. Jacob Lugo, hotel General Manager, Ms. Yulissa Garcia, Director of Sales, Mr. Edgar Torres, Executive Chef and Ms. Patrica Garcia, Banquet Manager.

The Executive panel, moderated by Dr. A.J. Singh, included discussions on career pathways, primary job responsibilities, challenges and opportunities, trends, market segments, and elements of success. The program served a dual purpose of exposing High School Students enrolled culinary programs to a potential Business degree pathway, and industry partner to present work opportunities to students while still in school.

Our grateful thanks goes to Mr. Barry and Hershhal Patel (MBA, UTRGV), for graciously hosting and supporting the effort and Ms. Yulissa Garcia for her flawless execution of the event.

News around the College

K-12 App Lab Workshop Held

Oscar Ramos, Lecturer and App Lab Manager recently welcomed ten K-12 students from the McAllen RGV Homeschoolers to the UTRGV App lab located inside the Center for Innovation and Commercialization in Weslaco, Texas. This was a 4-hour workshop where our students learned the basics of Swift Development on iOS Mobile Devices by playing on Playgrounds, building on Xcode, and rehashing the knowledge on Kahoot. We thank them for visiting us and we look forward to see them again in the Intro to App Dev with Swift LV 2 in the near future! Let's Code!



Irma Pye Featured in an HR Magazine

Irma Pye, a Visiting Professor in the Department of Management was recently featured in ASHHRA (American Society for Healthcare Human Resources Administration) magazine.

In the Spring 2023 edition of the **HR Pulse magazine**, Irma was featured in the HR Leader Spotlight section that covered her extensive career in HR and her passion for teaching and training the next generation of HR professionals. Irma has previously served as the President of ASHHRA. Irma is a long time HR professional. Prior to joining RCVCOBE, she has served as senior vice president and chief HR officer for Valley Baptist Health System. More recently, she has also served in a similar capacity at Doctors Hospital at Renaissance in Edinburg, Texas.



Irma Pye
Visiting Assistant Professor
Department of Management

Alumni Update

Wonsuk Cha Earned Promotion and Tenure



Dr. Wonsuk Cha, a 2017 graduate of our doctoral program in Management concentration, has **earned tenure and promotion to Associate Professor.**

Dr. Cha has been serving as an Assistant Professor of Management at Governors State University (GSU). Prior to joining GSU, he was on the faculty at Southern Connecticut State University. At GSU, Wonsuk teaches Strategic Management, Business and Society, Business Ethics, and International Business courses. His research interests include Strategic Leadership, Corporate Philanthropy, Corporate Social Responsibility, and Quality Management.

We congratulate Dr. Cha on this important milestone and wish him continued success going forward!

Daphne Wang Received a Research Award



Dr. Daphne Wang, a 2015 graduate of our our doctoral program in Finance concentration, has received the **2022-2023 Faculty Award for Excellence in Scholarship and Professional Activities (Research)** at Jacksonville University (JU).

Dr. Daphne Wang is the Walker/Wells Fargo Endowed Chair of Finance and Associate Professor of Finance at the Davis College of Business and Technology, Jacksonville University.

Daphne's research interests span a wide range, including corporate governance, financial crisis, mergers & acquisitions, insider trades, defined benefit pension plans. Her articles appeared in a variety of journals including Journal of Empirical Finance, Applied Economics, and Finance Research Letters among others. Congratulations, Dr. Daphne Wang! We are proud of your achievement!



Alumni Update

Madison Ngafeeson Recognized with Alumni Award



Dr. Madison Ngafeeson, a 2013 graduate of our doctoral program in Information Systems concentration, has been selected to receive a **distinguished alumnus award** by the Department of Information Systems.

Dr. Ngafeeson is currently a Professor and Chair of Business Data Analytics Program at Palm Beach Atlantic University. Beyond his outstanding academic accomplishments, Dr. Ngafeeson has an extensive track record of mentorship and community outreach initiatives including a his involvement with a leadership coaching not-for-profit organization.

We congratulate Dr. Ngafeeson on his impressive success and for being an excellent ambassador to RCVCOBE!

Cindy Pham Honored with Two College Awards



Dr. Ngoc (Cindy) Pham, a 2018 graduate of our our doctoral program in Marketing concentration, has recently been recognized with two awards. Dr. Pham was recognized with an **Excellence in Research** award and the **Dean's Special Impact Award for student influence** for her research record and outstanding student mentorship respectively.

Dr. Pham is an Assistant Professor of Marketing at the Koppelman School of Business, City University of New York-Brooklyn College. Her research interests focus on consumer behavior, international business, and healthcare marketing.

Congratulations, Dr. Pham! Keep up the great work!



ABOUT RCVCOBE

utrgv.edu/cobe

RCVCOBE MISSION STATEMENT

The Robert C. Vackar College of Business and Entrepreneurship promotes student success and serves as a catalyst for innovation, knowledge discovery, and economic development in South Texas, Northern Mexico, and beyond. We do so by offering relevant academic programs, committing to impactful research, and fostering community engagement and sustainable partnerships in a way that supports the university's mission.

RCVCOBE VISION STATEMENT

The Robert C. Vackar College of Business and Entrepreneurship will positively impact its local and global stakeholders through the discovery, integration, application, and teaching of business-focused knowledge addressing the critical needs of society.

RCVCOBE CORE VALUES

- **Our Commitment to Excellence**
 - Invest in our students' success by offering high quality and relevant academic programs.
- **Our Dedication to Thought Leadership**
 - Promote rigorous and high-impact scholarship.
 - Improve the academic reputation of RCV through impactful engagement with the scholarly community.
- **Our Passion for Empowerment and Impact**
 - Empower and support our students, faculty, and staff to make a difference in their communities through high impact teaching and learning practices.
- **Our Role as Agents of Transformation**
 - Cherish and support our positive role in the economic transformation of the Rio Grande Valley.
- **Our Belief in Diversity and Inclusion**
 - Steadfast commitment to welcoming and celebrating our diversity in all we do.

Contact Us:

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