40
YEARS
OF
SUCCESS

Ulster University
Business School
1975–2015

40th Anniversary Yearbook
This has been a busy year for Ulster University Business School. Across 2015 we have celebrated the 40th Anniversary of the School with our students, alumni, colleagues, international partners and stakeholders in the business community.

With over 6,000 students and over 60,000 alumni, Ulster University Business School has grown from a small regional School in 1975, to become one of the largest business schools in Britain, and in Ireland. We are set within a global context and we have global reach.

Our 40th Anniversary provided us with an opportunity to celebrate the success of our alumni, students and colleagues, and to showcase the impact of our work on a regional, national and international stage. This yearbook presents some of the highlights and memories from a truly remarkable year for Ulster University Business School.

Reflecting on the achievements of the Business School, we are proud to have played a significant part in developing the successful careers of our graduates, and to have supported local businesses and organisations in achieving their goals.

During the course of our 40th Anniversary year we worked on a number of specific projects with our stakeholders, and provided a range of over 20 specialist and professional branded events that were attended by over 2,000 people. In some cases these provided an opportunity for individuals to update their professional knowledge and skills, and in many others, they provided an opportunity to re-engage with the Business School. Over the course of the year, 5,000 of our alumni reconnected with the Business School. As a special project for the year we established a 40th Anniversary student scholarship fund and raised over £25,000 that will be used to support our students over the coming year.

I hope that you have had the opportunity to participate in some of our events over the course of this special year for our School, and that you will join us again in the not too distant future.

We are keen to maintain the momentum that our 40th Anniversary has created. In this context, if you are an alumnus/alumna of Ulster University Business School, and would like to help us in shaping the futures of our students, the future of business, and the future of the wider community, please contact n.read@ulster.ac.uk

– Professor Marie McHugh
Dean
Ulster University Business School
Reaching 40 is a significant milestone, it often leads people to reflect on their achievements and to look ahead to what ‘life after 40’ will bring.

Having reached the same milestone as Ulster University Business School myself this year, I can testify that a lot can happen in 40 years! It is remarkable how many of the issues facing economic policy makers in 1975 were the same as they are today: Trying to stimulate job growth, increase wealth, concerns over fairness and spatial equality. Of course the political situation is much calmer now, which certainly has had a positive impact on local economic conditions.

In 1975 there were over 1.5 million people living in Northern Ireland, and approximately 50,000 people were unemployed by the middle of what was a very tough year economically. Today there are 300,000 more people living in the region and 5,000 more people unemployed (LFS measure). In wealth terms living standards are almost identical relative to the UK average today as they were in 1975, about a quarter lower.

The average male worker earned £2,840 in 1975, females £1,690, compared to figures of £22,400 and £14,900 today. Microsoft was founded in April 1975 and the first Apple computer followed a year later. There can be no more staggering image of progress than setting these first computers alongside a modern phone – the shifts in processing power are scarcely believable. Few firms operating in 1975 are still in Northern Ireland today; Harland and Wolff shipyard was building tankers but already reporting falling demand.
The Delorean motor company was formed in 1975, though it would be 6 more years before the firm arrived in Dunmurry for its ill-fated adventure in putting Northern Ireland on the map as an automotive manufacturer.

The level of funding for public services is a constant feature of business headlines in 2015, but it is worth reflecting on the health and education outcomes and how they have improved since 1975.

Life expectancy has risen from 72 to 81 years, and the 5 year relative survival rate for cancer has improved from 50% to 68%. In terms of educational attainment, roughly 10% of the employed workforce had a degree, compared to 37% today.

£1 in 1975 would be equivalent to £7.76 today. Just look at the shift in prices of many common products:

- Watching the movie Jaws in a theatre would have cost 90p – it’s £7 today.
- A pint of beer would have cost 11p, compared to today’s £3.80.
- A Wembley Cup Final ticket cost £2, compared to £120 now.
- A twenty packet of cigarettes cost 27p compared to £7.00.
- Average house prices were £10,000 and now it’s £145,000.

But what of the next 40 years?

What new challenges will Ulster University Business School need to react to? A few trends are likely:

- The average worker in NI will earn £95,000 per year, a 5% house price annual increase will mean average house prices will be over £1 million and a pint of milk will cost £13.50. On the plus side a washing machine will still only cost £200!
- We will be living longer: life expectancies will be roughly 94 years.
- The internet of things will have taken hold and people will live in a universally connected world.
- It is likely our cars will not be fossil fuelled, we will probably have finally returned to set foot on the moon, or maybe even Mars, and perhaps regained the ability to travel at supersonic speeds.
- On a more sobering note, it is likely that the world will still struggle to feed and care for all its citizens because sadly many of the problems that existed globally in 1975 remain with us today.

Economic challenges are growing, resources are scarce, and the competition for jobs is constantly intensifying. But Ulster University Business School will continue to deliver for the Northern Ireland economy and, unlike the 40-year-old author of this article, age and maturity is only making it sharper at responding to the changing needs of an ever more complex world.

Professor Neil Gibson,
Director of Ulster University Economic Policy Centre
CONTINUING OUR SUPPORT FOR BUSINESS

Northern Ireland’s businesses are a resourceful bunch. They’ve managed to build a dynamic, innovative and varied economy from the humblest of beginnings and in the most difficult circumstances, particularly in the last seven years in the aftermath of the global credit crunch.

Ulster University Business School has been a constant companion to business, most obviously by educating some of the most successful business people in the land, but also by sharing its knowledge and experience to help drive entrepreneurship, leadership and policy.

In the last few years, that support has been ramped up a few gears by the appointment of three straight-talking gurus.

Michael McQuillan is Director of the Business Institute, a facility of the university which is unlike any other in that it doesn’t have any full-time undergraduates.

Instead it “offers an extensive suite of programmes and consultancy activities that will help to shape your future, your team’s future and your organisation’s future”. That’s the Business Institute’s tagline, one which is backed up by Michael’s industry experience.

He founded the Streat Café chain with his wife Nikki, and expanded it through a franchise model across the UK and Ireland, and since selling the business has devoted himself to teaching the key lessons he has learnt.

The Business Institute runs a management framework on an open programme basis, and is constantly making sure it’s answering the needs of business.
And it’s not just the private sector which can benefit from the Business Institute.

It also runs Advanced Diplomas for the third sector, and programmes for local government and the public sector, delivering impact through professionalising practice.

As head of the SME Development Centre, Kirsty McManus is making sure small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are getting support.

The Centre helps SMEs to access a level of expertise that would otherwise be unachievable for a company their size.

“Our role is to be the shop front for businesses who want to engage with the university,” she explained. “We’re here to offer a one-stop shop of support for SMEs.

It can be anything ranging from support for graduate placement, help with innovation vouchers, knowledge transfer partnerships, or consultancy.”

It also works with statutory agencies – such as Labour Relations, the Equality Commission, the Health and Safety Executive – to explore how they can unite as a support network for small businesses, organising practical support via its three patrons: Carson McDowell, Harbinson Mullholland, and Keys Commercial Finance.

All this has been driven by Kirsty’s obvious desire to see SMEs – and particularly micro businesses – in Northern Ireland succeed.

Professor Neil Gibson, heads the Ulster University Economic Policy Centre. “Our strapline is ‘to help Northern Ireland achieve its economic ambitions’,” Neil said. “That means carrying out research to help government make policy decisions, which will be conducive to the type of economy we would all be proud of.”

That research can lead to some interesting and impressive conclusions, but can also highlight some hard-to-swallow facts.

“Most people want less taxes and more money,” he explained. “We have to use our research and work closely with Kirsty and Michael to be able to reach a conclusion as to which will matter more to the economy.”

Ulster University Business School is ensuring that the process of evolution is underway, and it wants to let more businesses know that it’s here to help.
2015 marks the 40th anniversary of the first business graduates from Ulster University’s Business School. A committee comprising distinguished alumni led by former Danske Bank Chief Executive Officer, Gerry Mallon, hosted a programme of events and activities to mark this milestone culminating in a Ruby Celebratory Lunch held in November 2015 in Titanic Belfast.

Professor Aidan O’Reilly, who was Dean back in 1975, began with 40 staff and 300 undergraduates. Now the School is one of the largest faculties, with 6,000 students, 200 staff, a course list comprising over 100 undergraduate, postgraduate and PhD degrees. With links to Harvard and Babson College in Boston, the School has established itself as a major centre for management and business education internationally.

The world leading economic and societal impact of the School’s research has recently placed it 7th in the UK out of 101 business schools rated in the UK government assessment of university research, the REF 2014.

Gerry Mallon, former Danske Bank Chief Executive Officer, said, “The School is to be congratulated for all that it has achieved and can indeed look forward to the next 40 years with even more confidence.”

Notes: The 40th Anniversary Alumni Group comprised:
- Gerry Mallon, CEO, Danske Bank (Chair)
- Sean McGuire, Director of CBI, Belgium
- David Sterling, Permanent Secretary
- Margaret Byrne, MD, Henderson Group
- Julie Hastings, Marketing Director, Hastings Hotels Ltd
- Colin Walsh, MD, Crescent Capital
- Jamie Delargy, UTV Business Editor
- Jeremy Fitch, Executive Director, Invest NI
- Simon Hunter, MD, Hunter Apparel Solutions Ltd.
Bell and Farry Open New Financial Innovation Laboratory at Ulster University Business School

Enterprise Trade and Investment Minister Jonathan Bell and Employment and Learning Minister Dr Stephen Farry officially opened the new CME Group Financial Innovation Laboratory at Ulster University earlier this year.

The laboratory houses the most technologically advanced software to provide students and visitors with a hands-on experience of a dynamic trading environment, comparable to an investment bank.

Jonathan Bell said, “Focusing on real world financial technology, the laboratory will provide students with exposure to state of the art financial software and give them access to the expertise of leading industry, which will help to produce graduates with high level analytical skills.”

Dr Stephen Farry said, “The ‘fintech’ sector is key to the continued growth of our economy and I will continue to ensure the skills needs of the sector are met. My Department has recently launched a Financial Services Academy through the Assured Skills initiative and Ulster University Business School’s new Laboratory will be central to the delivery of the Academy training programme.”

Ulster University Business School has been developing links and working alongside CME Group since its establishment in Belfast in 2012.

With its focus on financial related technology, CME Group experts have provided invaluable advice and guidance on the set-up of the new laboratory. In parallel the CME Group Foundation, which shares a strong community ethos with the Business School, has provided significant investment to create, support and progress the facility.

Jim Oliff, CME Group Foundation Chairman, said, “Innovation is a hallmark of CME Group Foundation, and this initiative will help educate the next generation of innovative youth in Belfast to prepare them to join the global financial services industry.”
As part of the Business School’s 40th Anniversary celebrations, “The New Accountant” symposium was held on 25th September in W5. Chaired by Professor Robert Kirk, it explored current developments and opportunities within the accounting profession, drawn from distinguished Ulster alumni.

Professor Gillian Armstrong, Head of the Department of Accounting, Finance and Economics at Ulster University Business School, said, “Today’s qualified accountant is equipped with the skills and knowledge to work in any sector and act as a consultant, problem solver or business leader. Our keynote speaker Gary McCausland is a prime example.”

Gary McCausland, a Belfast born property developer, author and television presenter, outlined how the Graduate Diploma in Accounting made a significant difference to his career path.

He’s now CEO of the Richland Group, which he founded in 2001.

Gary was joined by Helen Brand OBE, ACCA Chief Executive; Patrina Buchanan, Technical Principal at the International Accounting Standards Board; Anthony Harbinson, Director of Safer Communities for the Department of Justice and ACCA President; and Patrick Gallen, Associate Partner PWC and Ulster Society Chairman CAI.
Northern Ireland Retailers Take Part in Study on In-Store Promotions

The Food Standards Agency in NI, and the Consumer Council for Northern Ireland have commissioned Ulster University Business School to carry out a study into stores’ food promotions to see if they offer shoppers enough healthy options.

Eight retailers are taking part: Asda; The Co-operative; Henderson Retail, owners of the SPAR & EUROSPAR franchises in Northern Ireland; Lidl Northern Ireland; Marks & Spencer; Musgrave Retail Partners NI; Nisa Retail Limited; and Tesco.

The research will address the consumer perception that special offers are usually on foods high in fat, sugar and salt – and that it is cheaper to eat less healthy foods than healthier ones.

Ruth Balmer, Senior Scientific Advisor in Dietary Health at the Food Standards Agency, said: “We want to encourage and enable food retailers to reduce the amount of foods high in fat, sugar and salt that are on offer, and instead to consider promoting healthier options.”

Dr Lynsey Hollywood, Lead Researcher at Ulster University Business School, said: “The research results, which are to be published in June 2016, will provide up-to-date, local data on food retailer promotions and help the industry assess the healthiness of those products typically available to consumers.”

The data gathered from the food retailers will be representative of both large and small operators in Northern Ireland and will focus on in-store and online promotions across a variety of retailers and retail formats.
Peter Crow Masterclass

A free master class offered to the business community during September focused on achieving competitive advantage through effective boardroom contributions.

The event was hosted by Peter Crow, an experienced company director, chairman and governance researcher from New Zealand.

Peter guides boards of directors and executives teams who want to create effective strategies, realise the potential of their businesses and govern well.

Some examples of Peter’s work include:

- Development and refinement of strategy development framework now in use within the Institute of Directors Company Directors course.
- Facilitation of professional development programmes including the Institute of Directors’ Company Directors course.
- Facilitation of processes to develop corporate strategy for over 50 organisations across many sectors, including transport and distribution, high technology, professional services, and health and social enterprises.
- Directorship of several medium-sized, high growth businesses.
- Establishment and leadership of the regional office of a multi-national software company, achieving 325% revenue growth in three years.

This master class showcased emerging international thinking on corporate governance, board practice, leadership, and strategy.

How to Compete in a World with 7 Billion People

In March Ulster University Business School teamed up with New York Times best-selling author Dr Bruce Piasecki to present an event entitled “How to compete in a world with 7 Billion people.”

The climate of global business is in a constant state of flux. Dr Piasecki gave a compelling vision of how we can thrive in a world that presents both opportunity for innovation and harsh repercussions for inaction.

Dr Piasecki has over 30 years’ experience of working with a range of global companies, including the Warren Buffett firm Shaw Industries and Toyota.
In February Ulster University Business School teamed up with the Bank of England to provide an “off the record” briefing on the Bank’s latest statistics and economic information. The Economic Outlook event was based on the Bank of England’s Latest Inflation Report and was presented by Gillian Anderson, Deputy Agent, Bank of England.

The event was hosted by Paul Stewart, Lecturer in Finance at the Business School and delegates were able to gain insight into the Bank of England’s data, trend analysis and future projections as to how the economy may impact on business.

Also in February Ulster University Business School teamed up with the Stena Line Belfast Giants to offer an opportunity for managers and leaders to learn from some of the latest academic thinking and take back lessons in successful leadership from the sports arena to their own organisations.

The delegates then were invited to stay and watch the Belfast Giants take on the Cardiff Devils, and win handsomely.

The event formed part of management month which is an opportunity for organisations to hone their management and leadership skills by taking part in lectures, conferences and events such as this.

Dr Martin McCracken from Ulster University Business School introduced over 80 guests to some theory, best practice and pitfalls of leadership and was then joined by Steve Thornton, Coach of the Belfast Giants to talk through how he manages to lead in a highly charged and results driven business. Dr McCracken was also joined by Giant’s player and Business School student Kevin Suarette to give his take on how the theory he is learning actually works in a team environment.
‘The Voice of Business’ was the title of a unique question time event hosted by Ulster University Business School’s SME Centre in partnership with Carson McDowell, as part of the School’s 40th Anniversary celebrations.

Chaired by Visiting Professor and Economist John Simpson, the five Chairs of Northern Ireland’s leading business organisations, Colin Walsh, CBI; Paul Terrington, IoD; Wilfred Mitchell, FSB; Kate Marshall, Women in Business and Kevin Kingston from the NI Chamber of Commerce and Industry, came together to discuss topical issues in front of an invited audience from the private and public sectors.

Kirsty McManus, Director of the SME Centre, said, “Northern Ireland’s business organisations fulfil an invaluable function for their members in terms of providing a platform and voice for many of the issues which impact the potential success and growth of the local economy. Our ‘Voice of Business’ event provided a unique opportunity to bring all these groups together.”

During the two-hour event, topics included the problems of gender inequality; the priorities for enhancing skills; key actions needed to create a pool of motivated managers; reform of the taxation system; and how to move Northern Ireland’s focus from low tech to higher tech businesses.

Neasa Quigley, joint head of Carson McDowell’s corporate team, said: “It is motivating to see our business association leaders engaging in robust debate about the issues that will determine the future of Northern Ireland’s economy.”
Diageo - Branding Masterclass

Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce and Industry, in partnership with Ulster University Business School, recently hosted a seminar with Jorge Lopes, Country Director of Diageo in Northern Ireland. With household names such as Guinness, Smirnoff and Baileys, the Diageo chief shared his expertise with 150 members of the local business community around how Diageo positioned itself as a global leader and how they continue to maintain this position.

Developing Managers Celebrates 40

As Ulster University Business School celebrates its 40th anniversary, Cohort 40 of the Developing Managers Programme have commenced their Advanced Diploma in Management Practice. Now in its 20th year the programme has evolved over time to reflect changing management needs. Targeted at practising managers it is relevant for anyone looking to develop and sustain a competitive advantage in an ever changing working environment.
We make an estimated economic impact of £41m per year.

Students rate us highly
The 2014/15 National Student Survey confirmed the Business School as:
- 1st in UK for Finance
- 5th in UK for Food and Beverage Studies
- 6th in UK for Accounting

Circa 400 students go on placement each year.

6TH LARGEST Business School in Britain and Ireland.
The Business School has over 60,000 alumni, in over 120 countries.

8th in the UK for number of completed KTPs.

68 completed KTPs.

40 visiting professors.

The latest UK Research Assessment Exercise positioned us as the leading Business School in Northern Ireland and ranked us 7th in the UK for the impact of our research.

2015:
- 7th
- 8th
- 12 professional bodies
- 40 years of success

We make an estimated economic impact of £41 million per year.

Students rate us highly:
- Number 1 in the UK for HRM for the second year running
- Number 1 in the UK for Management Studies
- Number 2 in the UK for Economics
- Number 2 in the UK for Food and Beverage Studies

Circa 400 students go on placement each year.

Completed KTPs:
- 68

Completed Innovation Vouchers:
- 8th in the UK for number of completed Innovation Vouchers.
“Innovation for the sake of innovation can damage a brand. Innovation is critical provided it supports or adds to the core equity.”

Jim Clerkin advised business leaders as keynote speaker at the PKF-FPM Annual Leadership Talk, Management Month initiative, in association with Ulster University Business School, at the Belfast campus.

Jim Clerkin’s 30-year career in the drinks industry followed a rapid rise within Guinness, and has included senior positions within Grand Metropolitan, Diageo, Allied Domecq and The Jim Beam Company.
Ulster University Business School in 7th Research Heaven

The 2014 Research Excellence Framework (REF) results showed that Ulster University Business School has recorded its best ever research performance. The School did particularly well in terms of research impact, coming 7th out of over 100 business schools in the UK.

Professor Paul Humphreys, Research Institute Director, said, “The REF is the UK Government’s method of assessing the quality of research in publicly funded UK higher education institutions. It is very important to us in being able to access ongoing funding and to position the School as a leading centre of research excellence against our peers.”

The School submitted three diverse research projects to the REF panel: research into advancing HR practice through employee wellbeing strategies with the aim of delivering increased employee engagement and reduced absenteeism; research into identifying business solutions that could enhance SME market orientation and thus competitiveness within the retail supply chain; and investigating ways to encourage hi-tech small firms to participate in European R&D and innovation funding programmes.

Professor Marie McHugh, Dean of Ulster University Business School, said, “Research is the life blood of any academic institution but quality research which has tangible benefits and measurable results can make a real difference especially in a business environment.

“At any one time we have a least 50 PhD students engaged in research projects working alongside 27 staff employed across the faculty, and supported where applicable by adjunct professors in Canada and Hong Kong.”

Employment and Learning Minister, Dr Stephen Farry, said: “Research capability is vital for economic growth, competitiveness and the well-being of our community. Through their research activities and transfer of knowledge, the universities continue to make a major contribution to the cultural, social and economic life of Northern Ireland.”

Image: Prof Paul Humphreys, Minister Dr Stephen Farry, Prof Marie McHugh
Ulster University Business School’s BSc and MSc Marketing students were given privileged access to the marketing strategies and expertise of US bakery giant Cinnabon as part of a two-year academic-industry partnership.

Cinnabon, which had brand revenues exceeding $1b last year, is an exemplar for best practice in distribution through their franchising model and operates in 60 countries across the world. Kat Cole, Group President of Cinnabon parent company Focus Brands has worked alongside Ulster University Business School’s Marketing Professor Mark Durkin and Dr Lynsey Hollywood to produce a teaching case study for use on the School’s marketing programmes.

Professor Durkin said, “Cinnabon is a company of scale that enables students to better understand food markets and food marketing internationally. Students can learn much from Cinnabon’s marketing ethos, its entrepreneurial flair and its sense of global ambition.”

Ms Cole, Focus Brands Group President, said, “After 30 years of building one of the world’s most indulgent and decadent brands, it’s an honour to share our experiences with others. Building businesses through a multichannel marketing approach is clearly the most innovative way to reach the broadest variety of customers.”
“School” Friends for 40 Years

Four friends gathered recently to share their memories of 40 years in service to Ulster University Business School.

Gillian Webb began as a secretary. She has worked with six Deans, and has fond memories of them all – particularly Aidan O’Reilly whose Christmas parties were legendary!

Kathleen Brown began as a clerk typist. She recalls sitting in Professor O’Reilly’s car during a bomb scare, transposing handwritten documents.

Carol Morley started as a typist. On her birthday in 1983, during an HNC class, a bomb went off sadly causing fatalities and many injuries.

Hazel Donnelly was 18 when she started in administration. She recalls the Polyclub, the social hub of the campus, where she met her future husband.

All four agreed that the comradeship of staff and students has been a constant throughout that time.

Event Helps Business to Improve

Ulster University Business School held an event with ICiPS in June aimed at senior managers with responsibility for continuous improvement in the public sector.

Continuous Improvement ensures customer needs are met today, and services adjust seamlessly to changing demands.

This event was an opportunity to hear from practitioners responsible for the design and implementation of successful schemes in the public sector. Gregg Hobbs, Head of Continuous Improvement Across Government, shared his experience.

Over 12 years, and across three central government departments (Ministry of Defence, HM Revenue & Customs, Cabinet Office), Gregg has focussed on leading people through change.

Derek Kennedy from the Forensic Service Northern Ireland also addressed the audience. Derek is Head of the FSNI Change Programme and member of the Strategic Investment Board. He is a graduate of the MSc Business Improvement and has spearheaded improvements to productivity and service delivery lead-time against budget cuts of 10%.
Motivational Mary is an Inspiration

“Motivational, inspirational, fabulous” were just three of the words used to describe Dr Mary Boyd, winner of the Inspirational Teaching Award at Ulster University’s Learning and Teaching Awards 2015. Organised by the Ulster University’s Students’ Union, the Awards are selected from nominations made by students across all faculties based on their personal and academic experience of their lecturers.

Dr Mary Boyd, who claimed the “Inspirational Teacher” title in the Ulster University Business School category, is a lecturer in Business Strategy in the Department of Marketing, Entrepreneurship and Strategy. The selection panel said that, “Mary’s passion for all things marketing combined with her attentive nature towards her students, has made us all feel like more than another ‘b’ number, and that she values us as much as we value her.”

Runners up in this category were Dr Lisa Bradley, Head of the Department of International Business at Magee and Mark McCrory, Lecturer in Management and Course Director for the full time MBA with the Ulster University Business School.

The presentations were made at a special Awards event hosted by Coleraine Students’ Union.

40th Anniversary with our visiting Professors

In October we celebrated our 40th Anniversary with our Visiting Professors, of whom we have over 40 at Ulster University Business School. The event was held in Stormont and celebrated the work carried out by our Visiting Professors on our behalf.

Ulster University Business School has a strong tradition of active engagement with the business community. This is particularly reflected in the School’s Visiting Professors whose collective experience and expertise spans all sectors of business.

Their contribution is invaluable in cementing the critical relationship between education and the realities of professional life.

Back row (left to right): Ken Addley, Director of Occupational Health, Ni Civil Service, Gordon Milligan, Chief Human Resources & Corporate Services Officer, Translink, Ken Belshaw, Founder, Grafton Recruitment, Philip Hamill, Dean of the Institute of Banking, IFSC, Simon Bridge, Consultant and Author, Simon Bridge Associates, Feargal McCormack, Managing Partner, PKF-FPM Accountants LLP, Wilfred Mitchell, Policy Chairman, Federation of Small Businesses

Front row (left to right): Philip Bain, Co-Founder and CEO of ShredBank, Mike Johnston, Chief Executive, Dairy Council for N Ireland, Carole Pemberton, International Executive Coach and Author, Lesley McClure, Former MD, IPSOS MORI NI, Marie McHugh, Dean of Ulster University Business School, Eleanor McAvoy, Chief Executive, Budget Energy Ltd, Anthony Harbinson, Director of Safe Communities Directorate, Department of Justice, Julie Hastings, Marketing Director, Hastings Hotels, Lester Manley, Chair and MD, Manleys Ltd, John Simpson, Economist, John Simpson Consulting
Ulster University Business School just completed a decade of co-operation with the School of International Business at Dongbei University of Finance and Economics (DUFE) in China.

On behalf of Chinese Consul General Wang Shuying, Deputy Consul General Meng Yuhong attended an International Gala Dinner at the Business School’s Academy Restaurant to mark the occasion along with over 30 of the Business School’s Chinese students from DUFE, South China Agricultural University and Shijiazhuang University who graduated in Belfast in 2015.

Professor Marie McHugh, Dean of Ulster University Business School said, “As a leading global business school DUFE has a strong focus on internationalisation and providing its students with every opportunity to access education which balances global perspective with local understanding.

“Ulster University Business School has made a significant contribution to these goals, particularly in the field of accounting and finance related programmes. Our links with international professional accounting and finance bodies such as ACCA and CISI provide our graduates with valuable professional recognition, are an added incentive and an important enhancement towards employment prospects.”

DUFE is one of China’s top-ranked finance, banking and economic universities. Ulster University Business School has welcomed over 120 students from DUFE since 2005 and plans to expand international partnership activity further.
Entrepreneurial Spirit Award to Top Ulster University Business School Student

Ulster University Business School student, Gavin Teggart, received the Entrepreneurial Spirit Award developed by Ulster University Business School in partnership with the Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Gavin’s award includes a bursary to cover the entire cost of studying his Master’s in Business Development and Innovation.

Professor Pauric McGowan, Chair of the judging panel, said, “Gavin was the unanimous choice of the panel for the Spirit of Entrepreneurship for 2015 in a competition at Ulster University Business School that attracted applications from a group of extremely strong candidates.”
Strategic planning, effective boards of directors and regular family meetings, are three critical elements leading to family business success.

These key factors were explored by Andrew Keyt, Family Business Network in North America, at a breakfast hosted by the SME Centre at Ulster University Business School in partnership with SME Centre Patron Harbinson Mulholland, during October.

A second keynote address was delivered by Vincent Carton, Managing Director of Manor Farm, who represents the 8th generation of the Carton Family to work in the Irish chicken business. Best practice was further discussed by a panel comprising William Barnett, CEO W&R Barnett; Stephen Stewart, Managing Director, Mervyn Stewart; Patrick Leonard, Partner, Harbinson Mulholland; and Lorraine Bell, Sales Director, GPS Colour Graphics Ltd and chaired by Ian Smyth, Ulster University researcher in family business.

Kirsty McManus, SME Centre at Ulster University Business School, said, “Over 74% of companies in Northern Ireland are classed as ‘family run’. Research has shown that only 3.2% of family businesses survive beyond the third generation and they display lower growth levels than non-family businesses. Clearly there are issues which need to be addressed to bridge the gap between the older generation’s interpretation of values and vision and that of their successors.”

Darren McDowell of Harbinson Mulholland added, “It’s important for us to reflect on the key success factors in helping this sector in reaching out for growth.”
Ulster University Business School has appointed Shredbank’s Chief Executive Philip Bain as a Visiting Professor.

Philip Bain, a First Class Honours graduate of the Business School, established Shredbank in 2007, and the company is now the largest locally owned on-site shredding business in Northern Ireland.

Students of Ulster University Business School are also working with Shredbank to create a digitised marketing strategy as part of the School’s new Digitising Marketing module.

The module focuses on helping small companies see the digital economy as an opportunity. Professor of Marketing, Mark Durkin, has partnered with one of the biggest software companies in the world – SAS Software – to develop and deliver the module, which is also offered as a short course.

Professor Durkin said, “We are committed to leading the digital agenda in terms of challenging existing thinking and providing new and innovative ways of leveraging digital technology for commercial advantage.

We’ve partnered with various companies to give our students exceptional hands-on experience. The digital economy presents opportunities to those whose focus is on the customer and not the technology itself – that is an important differentiation.”

Philip Bain has won numerous awards including Business Leader of Tomorrow, Entrepreneur of the Year 2010 and Young Businessperson of the Year in 2011.
Urban to Rural and Youthful to Wise

“We proved we could create a sustainable social enterprise that could tackle the most poignant issues in the community, we could use a product that nobody owned, and we could make money out of it and create employment.” The story of the creation of T13, Northern Ireland’s unique Urban Sports Academy in Belfast as told by Liam Lynch at Ulster University Business School’s interactive advocacy event held at the Magee Campus.

Social innovation and sustainability in the third sector were the key themes at the event where over 80 delegates also heard from Sir Tim Smit KBE, Founding Director of the award winning Eden Project in Cornwall.

A new publication “Urban to Rural and Youthful to Wise” was launched to showcase the advocacy work carried out by participant organisations on Ulster University Business School’s Advanced Diploma in Sustainable Investment for the Third Sector.

Organisations represented included Age NI, T13, Focus on Family, NORIBIC, Alzheimer’s Society, Resurgum Trust, Gems NI, Old Library Trust HCL, Onus, Peace Players, The Rainbow Project, Simon Community, Supporting Communities NI, Young Enterprise and YMCA.

Course Director, Janette Sheerman, said: “It relates the stories which are rarely told and demonstrates how third sector organisations advocate for people in our local communities.”

Azlina Bulmer, programmes and development manager at Charity Bank who helped set up the course, said: “We’re enabling organisations to learn critical skills and be financially and organisationally resilient, at a time when changes in funding are impacting those organisations and their beneficiaries.”

The Advanced Diploma in Sustainable Investment for the Third Sector is supported by the Atlantic Philanthropies, Charity Bank, Big Lottery and the Building Change Trust.
Ulster University Business School Celebrates 40 Years

Ulster University Business School celebrated its 40th anniversary in style with a gala lunch at Titanic Belfast. Over 450 alumni and friends of the Business School gathered to mark its past, present and future.

Dean of the School, Professor Marie McHugh, was joined by Ulster University’s Chancellor James Nesbitt and the Vice Chancellor Paddy Nixon to welcome guests throughout the UK, Ireland and from as far away as China and Switzerland.

In his keynote address the Chancellor paid tribute to the many achievements of the School saying: “Ulster University Business School is at the heart of key policy issues in business, management education and research. It reflects the University’s mission of supporting, facilitating and inspiring regional economic development.”

Guests also heard from a panel of distinguished alumni who talked about the School’s influence both at a personal level and to Northern Ireland as a business community. The Master of Ceremonies was veteran business journalist Jamie Delargy who is also an alumnus of the School.

The event was sponsored by Danske Bank, Noonan, Microsoft, NI Connections, Keystone Group and Titanic Belfast.
Professor LI Guozhu, Vice Dean; Professor LIU Dezhi, Dean of School of Economics and Trade, Shijiazhuang University of Economics; Chancellor James Nesbitt; Professor Marie McHugh; Professor Gillian Armstrong, Ulster University Business School

Professor YAO Yuan, Director of Institute of Management Science and Engineering, Henan University; Professor Marie McHugh; Professor Paddy Nixon; Associate Professor CHEN Junhua, Deputy Director of R&D Center of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Southwest Petroleum University

Lynn O’Hara, Danske Bank; Chancellor James Nesbitt; Mr Shaun McAnee, Danske Bank

Mrs Vanessa Gstrein; Chancellor James Nesbitt; Dame Mary Peters CH, DBE; Vice Chancellor Professor Paddy Nixon; Professor Marie McHugh

Tim Husbands from Titanic Belfast with Chancellor James Nesbitt

Dr Laura Wells, Karolyn Gaston and the team of student helpers

Professor LI Guozhi, Vice Dean; Professor LIU Dezhi, Dean of School of Economics and Trade, Shijiazhuang University of Economics; Chancellor James Nesbitt; Professor Marie McHugh; Professor Gillian Armstrong, Ulster University Business School
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Looking forward to the next 40 years.

Thanks to our sponsors: