

MBA MENTOR PROGRAM

MBA CAREER MANAGEMENT



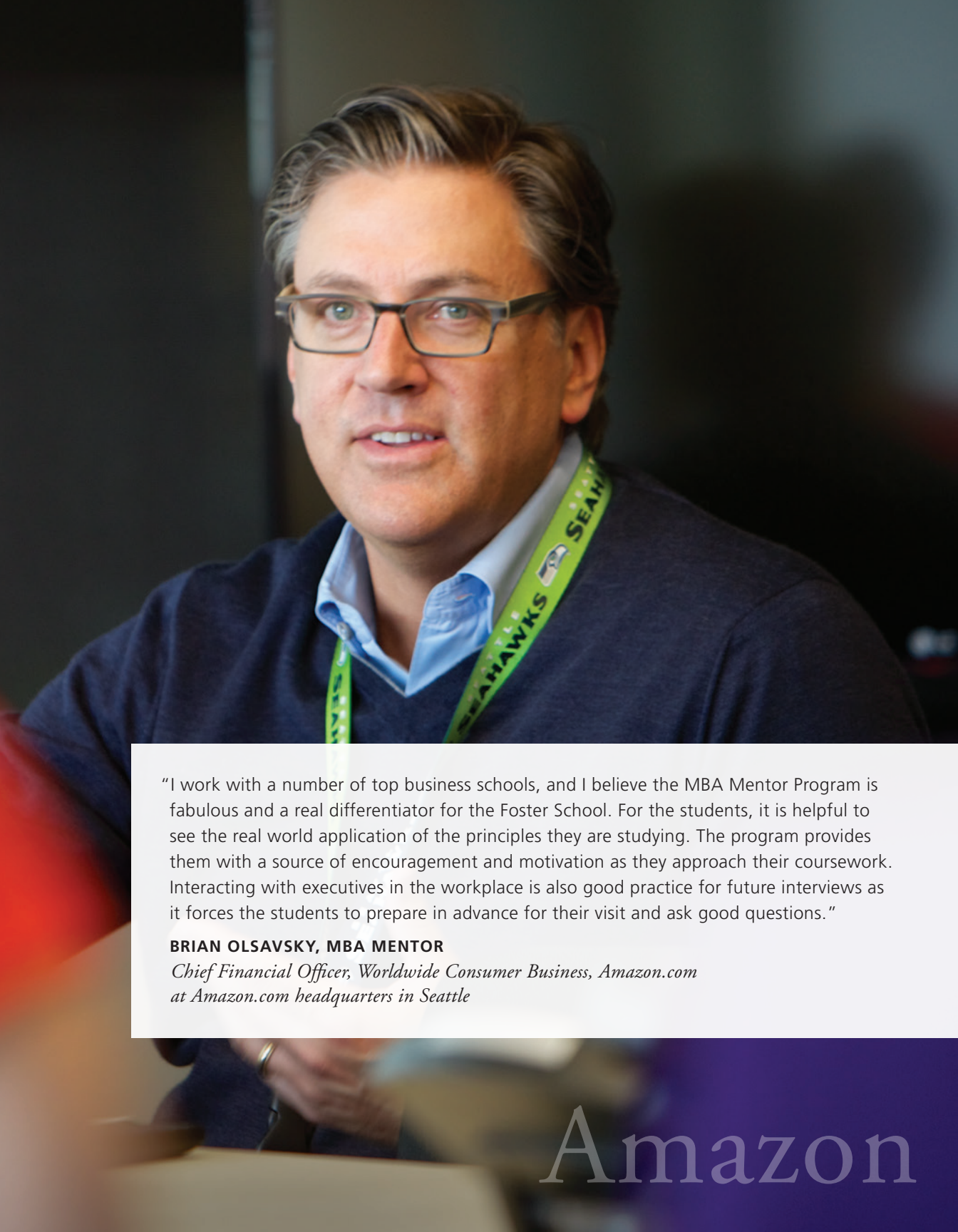
Foster
School of Business
UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

Sharing *the* Lessons *of* Experience

Business is a practical art. It can't be learned solely by reading a book, analyzing a case study or sitting in a classroom. Those who have built successful careers by practicing this art over the years have valuable lessons for those who are just starting the journey. The act of sharing insights about work, careers, and life enriches both students and their mentors, whether the conversation takes place in a single meeting or develops into a relationship that lasts a lifetime.

The Foster School's MBA Mentor Program grew out of these simple but powerful ideas. Created in 1999, the program has set a new standard for connecting MBA students with experienced executives and is a defining benefit of the Foster MBA Program. Whether you are a student navigating your way in the business world and building a sustainable career, or a mentor ready to share what you've learned about life and leadership, the MBA Mentor Program connects you with the future.

[Learn more>](#)



"I work with a number of top business schools, and I believe the MBA Mentor Program is fabulous and a real differentiator for the Foster School. For the students, it is helpful to see the real world application of the principles they are studying. The program provides them with a source of encouragement and motivation as they approach their coursework. Interacting with executives in the workplace is also good practice for future interviews as it forces the students to prepare in advance for their visit and ask good questions."

BRIAN OLSAVSKY, MBA MENTOR

*Chief Financial Officer, Worldwide Consumer Business, Amazon.com
at Amazon.com headquarters in Seattle*

Amazon



Student insights

Students at the Foster School of Business consistently rate interactions with mentors among their most valuable experiences in the MBA program. Through participation in the MBA Mentor Program, students explore career paths, obtain an inside view of industries, learn how executives meet difficult challenges, and gain insight into corporate strategy. Their experience with the Foster MBA Mentor Program helps them make better career choices and prepares them to make a smooth transition back to the business world after graduation.

Amazon



"When our group of Foster MBAs visited Amazon, Brian Olsavsky and his colleagues laid out their experience at the company and described their career paths. They shared details of their academic background and talked about other jobs they had held over the years. We got their perspective on the skill set required of a strong finance professional, both at Amazon and in the industry as a whole. They also gave us a lot of useful tips about how to identify our competitive advantages in the job market, and how to fill in gaps in our knowledge base. For students planning a career in corporate finance, it was a great opportunity."

KIRA THORIEN, MBA 2015

at Amazon.com headquarters in Seattle



Concur



Mentor rewards

The opportunity to share what you have learned with others just starting out is tremendously satisfying. Engaging with students prompts mentors to reflect on their own careers, formulate their views on what it takes to succeed in business, and summarize what they have learned about their industry or function. But that's not all. Mentors find the passion and energy of bright, savvy MBA students invigorating. The questions they ask are insightful, and they offer the fresh perspective of future business leaders. Staying in touch with the future is part of every executive's job, and these students represent the next generation. For all these reasons, mentors find this program very rewarding. About 80 executives serve as MBA mentors each year, and many return to the program year after year.

"Through mentoring, I learn what's in the hearts and minds of the next generation of leaders. The people who will run this company, and maybe this country, are in business school now. I want to know them so that I can help pave their way and be prepared for what they expect of their leaders as they grow. And the energy that is generated in our conversations stays with me for days after every interaction!"

ELENA DONIO, MBA MENTOR (left)

Executive Vice President and General Manager, Small and Mid-Market, Concur Technologies with MBA students Ruchika Gupta (right) and Kelsey Ingraham

On-site visits

FIRST YEAR STUDENTS

On-site visits offer first-year MBA students an opportunity to explore companies and industries while they are still defining the focus of their studies and their future career direction. Mentors host a small group of students—generally five to seven—for a two- to three-hour visit. Most on-site visits take place during winter quarter (January through March), although it is possible to schedule them at different times. The agenda for the visit depends on input from both the students and the mentor, but might include a meeting with other executives from the company, work on a case study related to the mentor's business, an overview of company strategy, discussion of career paths with recent MBA alumni, an overview of opportunities in the mentor's industry, question and answer sessions, and a company tour.

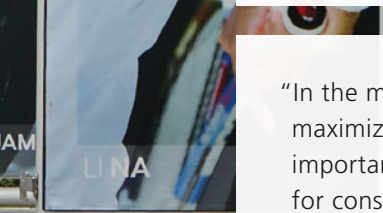




"The biggest reward I get from mentoring MBA students is the personal satisfaction that in a small way, I'm doing my share to pay forward for all of the great mentoring that I received in my career. Also, I think diversity-of-thought can be quite powerful—I feel like I learn more from each individual mentee than I can possibly give back."

CHRIS DORR, MBA MENTOR (*center*)

*Senior Director, Human Resources, Nike, Inc.
at Nike headquarters in Beaverton, Oregon*



"In the marketing field, every company, every marketing department is trying to maximize sales without jeopardizing their brand image. How to do that is very important. From Chris, I learned that Nike is trying to create an all-Nike experience for consumers, not just sell products. Nike is really ahead of the curve in terms of marketing. I think what I learned from this company visit can really be applied to my future career."

OLIVIA WANG, MBA 2015 (*third from left*)



Nike



Nordstrom

Ongoing mentoring

SECOND YEAR STUDENTS

As students define their career interests in the second year of the MBA program, they are better prepared to benefit from an ongoing mentoring relationship with a business executive. Students participating in this part of the MBA Mentor program are matched with a mentor whose background and experience align with the students' interests and goals. Each mentor is matched with one to three students. The format and frequency of the interactions between students and mentors vary, but most groups meet three or four times between January and May.

"Any leader in an organization is always trying to better themselves and fine-tune their skills. Talking with Jenna reminds me to slow down and make sure I'm explaining the process, and causes me to reflect on the process as well. Every piece of advice I give her I have to remind myself to live by. In that way, I'm learning just as much as she is. There's also the satisfaction of knowing that I'm not just taking, but giving back as well."

DIANKHA LINEAR, MBA MENTOR *(left)*

*Director of Corporate Compliance, Nordstrom
at Nordstrom headquarters in Seattle*

"MBA students spend a lot of time reaching out, trying to network and meet with professionals in the field. It's really hard to find someone who wants to take the time to invest in a student's future and show they're really interested in how well a student can do in their career. The MBA Mentor Program finds these great people in the community who want to make sure that students achieve their career goals."

JENNA CALUZA, MBA 2015



Best practices for a great mentoring relationship

Foster's MBA Mentor Program is based on insights gathered through years of experience matching students with senior executives. We've learned that successful mentoring requires a commitment from both students and mentors. Through their care and attention, the great mentors and mentees who have come through the program have shown how to establish, develop and maintain mutually rewarding mentoring relationships.

GREAT MENTORS:

- see the relationship as a two-way street—they learn as much as they teach
- create an atmosphere of trust and respect.
- genuinely enjoy mentoring.
- listen deeply and ask insightful questions.
- give honest feedback.
- are vulnerable and willing to share their own setbacks and how they overcame them.
- see abilities in mentees they may not see in themselves.
- discuss and help mentees set goals.
- facilitate connections.
- provide role modeling for work and life.



GREAT MENTEES:

- take initiative and maintain contact with their mentors.
- know what they want to learn and actively drive the relationships.
- prepare for meetings with specific questions and topics of discussion.
- are honest about challenges at work and in life, and are open to feedback.
- respect their mentors' time.
- express appreciation and let mentors know what has been helpful.
- lend mentors a hand when they can.
- create a network of mentoring relationships.
- pay it forward by seeking opportunities to mentor as well.



Lasting impact

Foster's MBA Mentor Program excels in creating opportunities to share experience across generations, an experience that both students and mentors find highly rewarding. Occasionally students and mentors find that their shared interests and personal rapport deepen into a long-term friendship. Such relationships approach the ideal of mentoring, the meeting of true minds across generations, an evolving conversation about work and life that may go on for years.

Richard Tait, an experienced intrapreneur (Microsoft) and entrepreneur (Cranium, Golazo) met Chris Howard through the MBA Mentor Program when Chris was a student at the Foster School. Since graduation, Chris has pursued a successful career in venture capital. They frequently share their insights on business, careers and the mentoring relationship with Foster MBA students.



“Richard’s always providing great insight and guidance, often trying to open doors for me, but never telling me which doors to walk through.”

CHRIS HOWARD, MBA 2007 *(left)*

“Learning is one thing: wisdom suggests the benefits of experience. Based on my own path, I want to pass on some of my experiences in the hope that it will help increase the likelihood of success for those that follow. I want to share stories about not only the doors that have opened, but also the doors that have closed. In life it’s not how many times you get knocked down, but how many times you get back up.”

RICHARD TAIT, MBA MENTOR

For more information on the MBA Mentor Program,
visit the website at foster.washington.edu/mentor

MBA Career Management

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Senior executives from the following selected companies have recently participated in the MBA Mentor Program:

Alaska Distributors Co	EMP Consulting Group	nsquared solutions
Alvarez and Marsal	Emotient	nVoq
Amazon.com	ENGEO	Oracle
Bay Partners	Expedia	PATH
Ben Bridge Jewelers	Fluke Capital Management, LP	PhaseRx
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	General Mills	Philips Healthcare
BlackRock	Globys	REI
Blue Box	Golazo	Revel Consulting
Blue Dog Bakery	Goldman Sachs	RIPL
The Boeing Company	Group Health	Russell Investments
BoldIQ	Ignition Partners	Saltchuk Resources, Inc
boomboom brands	IMDb	SeaBear Co.
TheBrownLounge.com	Intellectual Ventures	Seattle Cancer Care Alliance
Calipa Partners	Inviso Consulting Group	Sensors in Motion
Canin Associates	JL Sears Consulting, Inc.	Starbucks Coffee Company
Career Woman, Inc.	JP Morgan Chase & Co.	SwitchPoint LLC
Cascadia Capital	Lenati	T-Mobile
CFO Selections	Leviton Manufacturing, Inc.	Tableau Software
Concur Technologies	Main Street Equity Partners	Theraclone
Continental Mills	Microsoft	Three Point Group
Copacino + Fujikado	Montlake Capital	TNS
Corbis	Morgan Stanley	UW Evans School of Public Affairs
Deloitte US	MTG Management Consultants	Woods Creek Consulting Company
Duff and Phelps, LLC	Nike	Wright Runstad & Company
EMC	Nordstrom, Inc.	Zachary Scott & Co.