Innovative Thought Leaders

The new decade arrives at a fast and furious pace for those of us at McNair Hall. As host to 39 events this past quarter, we continue our outreach to prospective and current students, alumni, the Houston business community and the undergraduates at Rice. Dynamic speakers and innovative programming brought hundreds of people through our doors. Serving the business and professional needs of our community unequivocally supports what Jesse Jones believed in and what we strive to accomplish through our mission to excel at developing principled, innovative thought leaders in global communities.

Highlights

Television and newspaper coverage aside, we welcomed some heavy hitters to campus this quarter and introduced a few new programs to appeal to broader audiences. In March alone, we welcomed five high-profile events:

- On March 2 and 3, the third annual Energy Industry Directors Conference, a director education program designed for board members of energy and chemical companies, returned to Shell Auditorium. Co-sponsored by Fulbright and Jaworski, this year’s conference featured industry leaders and corporate governance experts. The financial cable network Bloomberg TV broadcast live from campus 7 to 9 a.m. Bloomberg’s "In the Loop with Betty Liu" did a series of shows on the road to highlight how major U.S. cities are recovering from the recession. The Rice broadcast focused on energy issues and included an interview with me and Doug Foshee.
- On March 11, Keith Anderson (Class of 1983), Chief Investment Officer for Soros Fund Management, LLC, agreed to be the inaugural speaker for the Undergraduate Business Minor Lecture Series. With approximately 170 in attendance, Keith addressed how personalities and strikingly different perspectives impact the culture and leadership functions of running a successful company.
- The Jones Graduate School of Business kicked off another new initiative March 17. Presented in conjunction with Rice Athletics, the Rice Sports and Business Series featured Bob McNair, Chairman and CEO of the Houston Texans. He spoke to a crowd of 200 about the NFL as a business.
- March 25 marked a memorable day for the Jones GSB when students, faculty, staff and guests rang the NYSE closing bell remotely from campus. The lively day, that included a candid conversation with student leaders and a panel discussion on the future of capital markets, was co-hosted by Duncan Niederauer, the CEO of NYSE Euronext. Panelists included James Hackett, chairman and CEO of Anadarko Petroleum and chairman of the Dallas Federal Reserve Board of Directors; Lanham Napier (Rice ‘93), president and CEO of Rackspace Hosting Inc.; James Turley
(Rice ’77, Rice MAcc ’78), global chairman and CEO of Ernst & Young; and John Carrig, president and chief operating officer of ConocoPhillips.

- Finally, over the last weekend in March, the Jones GSB partnered with Management Leadership for Tomorrow (MLT) to host a three-day training session. MLT is a national non-profit that has made ground-breaking progress developing the next generation of African American, Hispanic and Native American leaders in major corporations, non-profit organizations and entrepreneurial ventures, help minority young professionals at each stage of their careers.

Keeping it Real

Diverse topics and speakers reflect the wide-ranging interests of our students, faculty and business community. We strive to be both relevant and vibrant. The following lists more of the activities at McNair Hall.

- Sharon Birkman Fink, Executive Lecture Series
- Jones Partners Wright Fund Breakfast
- Texas-Africa Business Summit 2010
- Emerging Leaders program
- Women in Leadership Conference (NAW MBA)
- Professional Development Series – “Re-entering the Workforce”
- Career Rodeo
- Author Michael Lewis reading
- Boardroom Rock Stars: Shawn and Shane, footwear fashion entrepreneurs
- Best Boards Conference
- JGSEO
- Scholarship Dinner
- ALP Company Day Presentations
- Rice Alliance: Nanotechnology Forum
- International Energy Simulation
- Shawn and Shane, footwear fashion entrepreneurs

These events and the audiences they reach are only a fragment of what happens at McNair Hall daily. Innovation persists in our curriculum, with full faculty approval for the launch of our health care concentration (for full-time students) and track (for executives and professionals students), along with the roll out of the doctorate in finance that pushed total applications for the Ph.D in Business over 300 for just six openings during the PhD program’s second year.

These initiatives are all crucial to our commitment to developing principled, innovative thought leaders who will have an impact on not only the business community, but the world around them.

We hope you were able to experience a few of these affairs and look forward to greeting you when you’re next on campus.