In 1925, Jesse H. Jones said “It is in service that you will grow the greatest.” Serving our Jones Graduate School of Business constituents (our students, alumni, community, and each other), is fundamental to our success at fulfilling our mission of developing principled, innovative thought leaders in global communities.

Recognition for Excellence

The final quarter of 2010 in many ways reflected how the quality of our services over the years is now being positively measured. Several years of dedicated service to our students, growth for excellence, increasingly productive faculty, and aggressive corporate and alumni development have resulted in record levels of positive recognition for the school.

Rankings, though only a partial measurement of quality, are somewhat reflective of our service as measured by the public recognition we have received that illustrates the commitment and dedication of our faculty, professional staff, exemplary students, and the appreciation of the Rice community. Key milestones include:

- First ever ranking of the Rice MBA for Professionals: Ranked 8th by BusinessWeek
- First ever top 30 placement for the Rice MBA Full-Time program in BusinessWeek
- First ever Top 20 recognition of the Rice MBA for Executives from the Wall Street Journal
- Top 6th recognition from Princeton Review for both graduate entrepreneurship programs and overall quality of professors
- Top 10 recognition for faculty contributions to intellectual capital through research by BusinessWeek
- 12th overall in the USA for the Rice MBA program for Executives in the Financial Times
- 21st overall in the USA for the Rice MBA Full-Time program in the Financial Times

Enrollments

The application process is still quite early but thus far, the admissions departments have experienced an increase in application volume. The January 2011 deadlines for the Rice MBA Full Time resulted in year-to-date increases of 32% and the Rice MBA for Professionals applications are up by 26%. Although it is far too early to report the applications status for the Rice MBA for Executives, I can say that they too have experienced an increase of year-to-date volume over last year. Although the budget implications of the unanticipated dip in enrollments in fall 2010 will remain a concern into FY2012, we will maintain our firm commitment to sustain or increase quality in all programs.

To more closely analyze the enrollment strategies and to ameliorate the services we provide our students, Professor Randy Batsell conducted a national study of “Why People Get (Or Do Not Get) an MBA.” Carefully selected respondents were between the ages of 24 and 50, had earned a college degree, and have neither an MBA nor are actively involved in an MBA program. Online surveys were conducted in a variety of metropolitan areas and results of the research are in the process of summarization and will be communicated as they are more thoroughly defined.

Current Initiatives

During the past months, I have entered into exploratory discussions with both faculty, and finance and accounting corporate leaders from the major accounting firms, about the feasibility of re-launching the Rice Masters of Accountancy (MAcc). The premise for the discussions was that Rice might relaunch a top quality MAcc at a time when public accounting is rapidly changing. There was positive support to continue the discussions and more information regarding the re-launch is forthcoming as the exchange of ideas progresses.
The Centennial Campaign is moving ahead under the tutelage of Ben Renberg who has been working closely with Rice central development, Jones School senior leadership and the broader Rice community to expand and further the presence and reach of the Jones Graduate School. Ben’s extensive background in the nonprofit sector will help steer us in a successful direction that will help us meet our goals and objectives.

To aid in our strategy of enhancing student excellence, the office of student services actively supported the school’s professional development of students in organizations outside the classroom. In November, 60 prospective underrepresented minority students attended our fourth annual Diversity Preview Weekend. The response to the weekend was exceedingly positive. Based on a post-event survey, 94% of attendees are more likely to submit an application, and 100% are more likely to attend Rice.

Service to our students and alumni is greatly reflected in our Career Management Center (CMC). This past fall, the CMC hosted over 25 on-campus company information sessions. We are pleased to report that job postings are up 16% over last year, averaging 115 available positions per month.

Executive Education continues to experience a resurgence of interest following the recession and uncertainty in the regulatory environment of the energy industry. During the past year custom executive programs were conducted for several large corporations. Executive Educations most ambitious project continues to be assisting National Oilwell Varco (NOV) in the design and development of their corporate university.

Several Jones School alumni have helped us reach potential students outside of Houston through programs like the Jones Alumni Volunteers for Admission (JAVA). Our more visible community presence through JAVA is strengthening our marketing efforts for both Rice Executive Education as well as Rice MBA recruitment. The JAVA membership grew substantially this past fall – from 330 in August to just over 365 in December. We now enjoy better representation in strategic areas like China, India, and Mexico.

The amount of national and international press the school received increased dramatically during this past quarter primarily as a result of Utpal Dholakia’s research regarding Groupon. Articles quoting the study appeared in the press for nearly 30 days and over 50 articles were printed in publications such as the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Entrepreneur Magazine, Forbes, Inc. Quotes also appeared in numerous online articles and mentions on radio and television stations across the country.

The JGSB Board Fellows Program has been successful in matching Rice MBA candidates with Houston nonprofit organizations to serve as non-voting board members. As Board Fellows, students assist the nonprofit business sector by providing them with cutting edge information and research learned in the classroom. Simultaneously the students develop their own leadership skills in becoming socially responsible leaders. Furthermore, we had a record number of first-year students from all three MBA programs apply for Board Fellow positions, and with the help of several alumni and Council of Overseers members, we doubled the number of participating NPOs.

The depth of our involvement in organizations like NSH MBA, NAW MBA, United Way, Vision 2020, the JGSB Board Fellows, and many other service organizations that touch so many people, makes me extremely proud of the tireless efforts of service provided to our community. As always, I hope you will continue to expand your interest and concern for the Jones Graduate School of Business. Your service to the school helps us fulfill our mission and honor the legacy of Jesse Jones. Please contact me with your ideas and suggestions.