July 2010

With summer in full swing, we greet the heat with gratitude for the support of our alumni, the strength of our programs, and the excellence with which we are able to develop thought leadership in business at Rice University. The quarterly report is an opportunity to reflect on the milestones of three months by detailing the accomplishments, accolades and activities of our community of students, alumni, faculty and staff. It recognizes what we’re doing well and how to keep up the momentum. More than measuring how far we’ve come, it acknowledges where we’re headed.

Support

Alumni participation in giving hit a record high this year with 22 percent, translating to 898 alumni giving a gift to the Jones School in fiscal year 2010. Alumni support is so important during these tough economic times and we greatly appreciate yours. Associate Director of Development Donna Platt and Jones Fund Chair Kevin DeNicola ‘87 demonstrated their leadership, perseverance, and commitment to the school during the campaign this year. My warmest thanks go out to them as well.

The Class of 2010 set the bar high with their support. Overall participation by all three programs reached an impressive 95 percent. Engaged committees of Rice MBA in each program stepped forward to propel the Jones Fund to the most successful year ever.

This legacy of philanthropy continues to illustrate the nature and stature of our alumni in the tradition of Jesse H. Jones’ comment that “Success is measured by the service you render and the character of citizen you make.”

Programs

The strength of our programs comes in many different packages.

The Rice Business Plan Competition, the world’s largest and richest, celebrated its tenth year in April with record-breaking numbers in prize money, applicants, judges, categories and sponsors. The competition awarded more than $1 million in prizes to aid startup businesses.

In May our Investiture ceremony marked the first class of Rice MBA graduates through the Rice Education Entrepreneurship Program (REEP). The graduates from this experimental program are already receiving impressive promotions to principal in the Houston area Independent School Districts and charter schools. With the support of the Houston Endowment, this program is helping to develop Houston as a hub of education entrepreneurship that benefits primary and secondary students in underserved communities.
Another group of PhD candidates joins the fold at McNair Hall, two new in marketing and four inaugural in finance, making for a total of ten. We’re also introducing new curriculum in health care for Rice MBA students including a concentration for full-time students and a specialization track for professionals and executives.

Excellence

Several faculty members received distinguished recognition within their professions in the last quarter, demonstrating the environment of excellence where faculty research meets classroom learning.

Robert Hoskisson, the George R. Brown Professor of Management, was recognized as one of the top 25 researchers in business and economics, globally, by Times Higher Education; Associate Professor of Finance and Gerald D. Hines Associate Professor of Real Estate Jefferson Duarte’s paper “Why is PIN Priced?” was selected as the best paper in capital markets and asset pricing by the Journal of Financial Economics; and Yan Anthea Zhang, Jones School Distinguished Associate Professor of Management and Associate Professor of Strategic Management, was voted the 2010 Emerging Scholar by the Strategic Management Society.

Where We’re Headed

The new academic year will be upon us before we know it. Many events are already taking shape after last year’s successes so make room on your calendar for The Next Cool Idea Weekend-IdeaLab July 23-25, Alumni Wine Tasting Reception on August 19, the Energy and Clean Technology Venture Forum on September 16, the alumni reception on the NYSE floor on October 20, and the Rice Energy Finance Summit (confirmed speakers and sponsors will be included on the website soon) on October 28. Find something to bring you back on campus this summer or fall. We’ll see you then.