



**“MTSU has a special place in my heart because it's a state university, where I came from, and because the I/O program is so outstanding.”**

- Deb Tobey, Organization and Human Performance Solutions Consultant

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# MTSU Industrial / Organizational Psychology Program

## Breakfast Series Connects Students and HR Professionals

- Shayna Hansen and Kasia Urban, 2006-07 2nd year graduate students and MTSU-SHRM Breakfast Series Coordinators

Several times each semester the Middle Tennessee State University Student Chapter of the Society for Human Resource Management invites MTSU faculty, staff, students, and professionals from the Middle Tennessee area to share breakfast and hear a presentation by a prominent figure in the HR field as a part of hosting the MTSU-SHRM Breakfast Series. This event provides a service to the academic and professional community, and raises funds for

student programs and scholarships in the field of human resources.

The MTSU-SHRM Breakfast Series provides tremendous benefits to students. The series presents the unique opportunity to meet and learn from leading practitioners in the Human Resources and related fields; as well as a convenient means for students to connect with the immediate professional and academic community while

gaining valuable practical experience. Additionally the MTSU-SHRM Breakfast Series allows students to hear how their academic knowledge is being applied in organizational settings.

Previous speaker Glenda McCall Blank, Director of Learning and Development at Shop at Home, stated “I felt I was able to help students connect classroom learning with practical business application.”

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## COHRE's Latest Project : The United Way

One of the unique and most prestigious characteristics about the I/O program here at MTSU is COHRE: the Center for Organizational and Human Resource Effectiveness. This resource serves as an external consulting firm

developing students and faculty through the creation of professional partnerships with local, regional, and nationally based organizations. The praise and attention that COHRE attracts make it one of the factors that distinguish this pro-

gram from others around the nation.

Among COHRE's recent endeavors has been a project with the United Way, being led collaboratively by Patrick McCarthy and Michael Hein.

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Seth Thomas (left) with Dr. Rick Moffett at SEPA 2006, Atlanta.

Another Part of SEPA...

A very big point of SEPA's conference, from our program's perspective, is the annual gathering of SEIOPA, the Southeastern Industrial/Organizational Psychological Association, which takes place concurrently. This year, MTSU's own Dr. Rick Moffett served as president of SEIOPA.



This picture of downtown Atlanta, along with the one of the Atlanta aquarium, was taken by Seth

**SEPA 2006 : A Personal Account** by Seth Thomas

I had three main reasons for going to the Southeastern Psychological Association conference in Atlanta. First, I wanted to meet someone from Hogan Assessments because I intended to use one of their measures in my thesis. Looking over the program, I also noticed that a couple of people from my undergraduate school, Northern Kentucky University, were also presenting a poster at SEPA. At the same time, I had never been to Atlanta before which was another reason why I was excited about making the trip.

I had a wonderful experience at the SEPA. It was a great opportunity for me to learn about what is happening in a variety of areas of psychology. Among the topics covered by presentations I attended were the role of high quality relationships in the workplace, the future of clinical psychology, success stories using online courses, studying learning in dolphins, and life stories of the of the world of academia, consulting, and business. All of the presentations left me with questions to think about. While equally interesting, the poster presentations I saw varied greatly, dealing with such research as the negative effects of making kids repeat a grade, the use of country music in positive psychology, the effect that cell phone use has on driving, and the relationship between employee

empowerment and individual's goal orientation. With a wide variety of presentation styles, it allowed me to think about how I would structure and present my thesis.



Going to SEPA was a watershed experience for me. I learned that I could be professional and have fun at the same time. I gained some confidence about approaching people and starting a conversation, which was surprising to me coming into the event. I also got an opportunity to talk with some alumni from the I/O program who had gone into consulting after leaving the program. The conference surpassed my expectations, and I am glad that I had the opportunity to attend.

## Breakfast Series Connects Students and HR Professionals

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The series also presents countless networking and internship possibilities. As previous speaker, Deb Tobey, noted “[the MTSU-SHRM Breakfast Series is] where you (the student) make connections for work—in searching for a job, in finding out what best practices are out there, benchmarking your operations, learning from others, building your individual reputation so potential clients and potential employers come to YOU, and commiserating with people who know what you are going through.”

The MTSU-SHRM Breakfast Series also benefits Middle Tennessee State University and the Middle Tennessee Society of Human Resource Management student chapter. In reaching out to the HR professionals from the Middle Tennessee area as well as MTSU faculty and students, the Breakfast Series strengthens relationships with program and chapter alumni. It is not uncommon to have

MTSU alumni regularly attend and present at the Breakfast Series events. As discussed by previous speaker Deb Tobey, “MTSU has a special place in my heart because it’s a state university, where I came from, and because the I/O program is so outstanding. Being in touch with the community, through such events, helps MTSU build the reputation as a member of the community and the reputation of being a preparer of professionals who know what they are doing in their respective fields.” The Breakfast Series events also help to raise funds for student programs and scholarships in the field of human resources, as well as build Merit Award points that have resulted in MTSU-SHRM’s receiving of the Merit Award and Superior Merit Award for being an outstanding chapter.

Speakers that have been brought in this past Fall 2006 semester as well as those who will be speaking this Spring 2007 semester include:

**James Patterson, Jr.**, Attorney at Ogletree, Deakins, Nash, Smoak & Stewart, P.C.

**Denis Blackwelder**, Corporate Development Director, Senior Vice President at Barge, Waggoner, Sumner & Cannon.

**Deb Tobey**, Organization and Human Performance Solutions Consultant.

**Kellie Conn**, Director of Human Resources for Paradigm Group and MT SHRM President.

**Jacky Jones**, Regional Human Resource Generalist for Sara Lee Bakery Group.

**Jennifer Wright Hall**, Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence.

**Katie Rawls**, Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence.

**Kim Vance**, Attorney, Labor and Employment Group at Baker Donelson.



**Kim Vance**

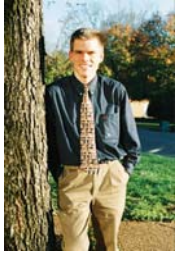


**Denis Blackwelder**

**“An investment  
in knowledge  
always pays  
interest.”  
—Benjamin  
Franklin**



**James Patterson, Jr.**



Dr. Patrick McCarthy

**“Don’t be too timid and squeamish about your actions. All of life is an experiment. The more experiments you make the better.”**

**—Ralph Waldo Emerson**

**COHRE’s Latest Project : The United**

Rick Moffett, COHRE’s director, initially organized and continues to assist on the partnership.

The project entails a movement towards a ‘Community Impact’ approach, in which the needs of the community are identified and prioritized in a strategic way. Where COHRE steps in is to facilitate the needs assessment and organizational restructuring that this process involves. Said McCarthy: “The needs assessment will determine what needs are the highest priority in our community and how we can best assure that the United Way is helping meet those needs. We have one of the leading attempts in the nation to develop and implement this.”

Moreover, the United Way is looking to assist those organizations who stand to most directly impact these problems at their roots causes, rather than simply treating the symp-

toms.

Also involved in this project will be Leadership Rutherford, providing integral research of ‘Community Impact’ efforts from other places nationally, as well as assisting in identifying stakeholders to involve in the analysis of regional issues. Furthermore, current United Way stakeholders, including United Way donors and recipients, as well as a wide variety of community representatives, will be involved in establishing what matters will be prioritized in the ‘Community Impact’ model.

Ultimately, once all of these groups have determined the appropriate steps to be taken, COHRE will also assist in developing and providing training to those agencies who apply for resources from the United Way.

**Class Projects: Where the Rubber Meets the Road**

*2nd year student Jennifer Chambers provides her account of the project undertaken by the Advanced Training & Analysis class, during her 1st semester.*

Never before has the phrase ‘hit the ground running’ been so appropriate than the first semester in the Industrial/Organizational Program at MTSU. As a first year, first semester student, I was prepared for

lots of notes, hours of lecture, and massive data storage. While the word “applied” was thrown around, I equated that to mean the notes would be used in class work. In a way, I was correct.

Dr. Michael Hein was the professor in the Advanced Training and Analysis Class. It was in this class that I received my first taste

of training procedure. This class also taught me how to work with clients, how to assess the actual needs instead of just the perceived needs, and how to be flexible with the resources given. These lessons were not notes that were quickly copied from the board.

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**Dr. Mike Hein and the Fall 2005 Training and Analysis Class, receiving a check for their work with the Holland Group.**

## Introducing our Class of 2008 I/O Masters Students

Here is a peek into the profiles of our class of 2008 I/O Master's students. The fascinating part about this group is that each of them comes from a different state in the United States. Keeping with our tradition of admitting international students in our program, we also have a student from India.

Some of them provide us with an insight into their background, interests in I/O and their experiences at MTSU so far.

**Alexis Scobie** - My experience in the program has been great so far. The coursework has been challenging, but the faculty is very supportive and is willing to help you as much as they can.

- Bachelor's in Psychology with a minor in Sociology at Southwestern University.
- Interested in selection, compensation and benefits, and job analysis.
- I still haven't decided exactly what area of I/O that I want to work in, but I'm constantly getting new ideas from the

material in my classes.

- I chose this program mainly for the applied experience that is available to students. Also, frequent contact with Dr. McCarthy and Anna Littlepage made me feel very welcome here. It really made this program stand out when compared to others.
- I'm a HUGE baseball fan (I love everything about the sport). I also enjoy working out, reading, watching movies, and baking.

**Andrea Yacub** - The main reason I chose MTSU was because of the positive and friendly atmosphere that was portrayed to me during the application process, and that positive atmosphere is definitely continues to be present now that I am currently a part of the program.

- The faculty, second-year students and my classmates are all very supportive and are always willing to lend a helping hand. The faculty is very approachable and makes this a program for the students; they are willing to do what it takes to make it the best experience possible.
- My interest in I/O is very broad right now. As a

first year student, I am constantly learning new things about the field from my own curiosity, as well as from the faculty and the second-year students.

- From the knowledge and information I have gained thus far, I am interested in pursuing a career in HR or compensation; I look forward to learning more about these areas as I advance through the program.

The workload provides a range of information, that interesting and can be challenging at times, but there are always peers and professor around to encourage and support you.

**Ashley Crow** - My experience thus far in the program has been excellent. I am really enjoying learning about I/O psychology and looking forward to the next year to come. All the classes I have taken have been interesting and I know now that this field is a great fit for me!

-Bachelors Degree in Psychology and Business Administration from Westminster College, Fulton Missouri.

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**Teamwork creates greater possibilities**

**“Don't live down to expectations. Go out there and do something remarkable.”  
— Wendy Wasserstein**





The ladies enjoying their time out in Nashville. (From left to right) Carlyn Hart, Laurie Kloster, Alexis Scobie, Courtney Terrell, Kara Jeansonne, Andrea Yacub, Ashley Crow

**“Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.”**

**— Henry Ford**

*Ashley Crow cont.*

- Right now I am simply exploring my interests. There are many areas that already appeal to me, but I want to take more classes before I commit to narrowing down my interests.

- I would like to work in a consulting firm.
- I chose this program because of its reputation, applied experiences, and genuine concern for the success of their students.
- I enjoy spending time with my yorkie named Riley and family and friends as well as working out when I get the chance!

**Brannan McDougald** – My experience in the program thus far has been positive. Overall, the faculty has shown their dedication to the graduate students' development.

- Bachelor's in Psychology at the University of Georgia.
- Interested in leadership, training, and teams currently.
- Would like to work in an organization that emphasizes a work-life balance.
- "I chose this program because of the applied opportunities it provides and their reputation."

- Likes: reading, working out, drawing, movies, and video games.

**Carlyn Hart** - My experience in the program so far has been incredible. In the past semester I've had the opportunity to learn new and interesting concepts, as well as apply them in actual organizations and elsewhere. I have to say my favorite part though has been meeting new people and making friends. This program is so inviting and I really feel like a part of a close-knit community

- Bachelor's Degree in Psychology from the University of Virginia
- Interested in Organizational Development
- I chose this program because I was welcomed here with open arms and the reputation is stellar. It also seemed to be the best fit for me (and I was right)
- Like to sing, read, and play with my dog, Ginny :)!

**Courtney Terrell** - I am from Atlanta, Georgia.

- I graduated from Oglethorpe University in Atlanta with a degree in Psychology.
- I chose this program because of its reputation and individual focus on each student. I have had a

great experience so far and have enjoyed getting to know amazing people and learning so much.

- I am interested in compensation right now, but have not completely decided on a focus.
- I hope my internship and classes will help me narrow down my area of interest.
- Outside of class I like to run and play soccer.

**Jacob Seybert** - I have found the program to be challenging and rewarding. The support from the faculty and students has exceeded my expectations and is a great part of this program.

- B.S. in Psychology from Colorado State University
- Interested in selection, placement, and legal issues.
- I'm still searching for my perfect career path. I'm hoping to move into a Ph.D. program following graduation (that's the plan for now!) and perhaps stay in academia.
- I came to MTSU due to its excellent reputation and the strong emphasis on applied learning on top of research.

- Enjoys reading, movies, current events, and playing games.

**Kara Jeansonne**

- Undergraduate degree: Louisiana State University, B.S., Psychology and Sociology

- I'm interested in I/O because of its capacity for real-world application. Specifically, I'm looking forward to learning more about recruiting, selection, leadership and work-family issues.

- I'm keeping my eye on the redevelopment of New Orleans. I hope to return there at some point during my career, though I'm not sure what *exactly* I'd like to do when I complete the program. I'm keeping my options open!

- I chose MTSU because of its excellent reputation and the extremely helpful, supportive faculty.

- I enjoy dancing and working out.

**Laurie Kloster** - My experience so far in the MTSU I/O program has been very positive. I have met some truly wonderful people and have learned a lot. Classes have been very challenging, but rewarding as well.

- Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, St. Mary's College of Maryland

- My interests in I/O are very broad at this point. I am still in the process of determining which aspects

of I/O appeal the most to me. However, I believe selection/recruiting may become one main interest.

- I am not entirely sure what career will best suit me. I guess that's part of the reason why I'm here! However, I envision myself working in consulting or government in the future.

- I chose this program primarily because of its excellent reputation. I also was very impressed with Dr. McCarthy's close involvement with the newly-accepted students in the I/O program. In deciding on which graduate school to choose, Dr. McCarthy's warm welcome and genuine enthusiasm certainly made my decision easier.

- I love to travel. Some places I have traveled include Alaska, London, and Paris, and I am looking forward to traveling a great deal more in the future. I also enjoy horse-back riding and singing.

**Santoshi Pattem** - My experience at MTSU so far has been incredible. The program culture and its quality have been very impressive. The support I have received from my fellow classmates and the faculty has been extremely helpful.

- Masters in Business Administration specializing in Human Resource Management, India.

- I/O's scientific approach towards the functions of HR is what attracted me. I am interested in Training and Development.
- I chose this program because of its quality, reputation and the various applied opportunities it provides. As one of my classmates had rightly indicated, Dr. McCarthy's welcoming attitude during the admission process definitely served as one of the major factors in my decision to join the program.

- Enjoys reading, listening to music and traveling.

**Tracy Bojko**

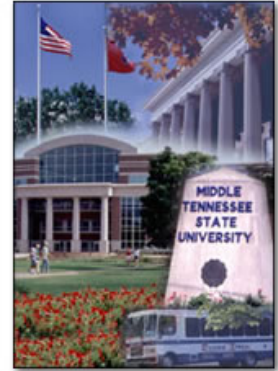
- Bachelors in Psychology, Minors in Business (Concentration in HR) and Spanish from St. John Fisher College in New York.

- Interested in Training and OD.

- After gaining some experience, would ultimately like to work as a consultant.

- This I.O. Program has a great reputation and initially appealed to me because of its applied psychology focus.

- I enjoy playing soccer and traveling.



**"Imagine how dull life would be if variables assessed for admission to a graduate program really did predict who would succeed and who would fall. Life would be intolerable — no hope, no challenge"**  
 — *R.M. Dawes*





MTSU's  
Kirksey Old Main  
in the Fall

**“You should be  
the change that  
you want to see  
in the world.”**

**— Mahatma  
Gandhi.**



### The I/O Program proudly introduces Wes Wingo.

We proudly introduce one of our first year students, Wes Wingo.

Wes originally was a part of our program in Spring 2005, but was called up by the National Guard to serve in Iraq. Fortunately, he had returned during Thanksgiving last year, and decided to re-join the program this Spring. We wanted to acknowledge his presence in the program and the fact that he is a great addition to our program. Wes shared with us his experiences in Iraq and his thoughts about coming back to the program

**(i) How has your experience been so far at MTSU?**

It's been great so far. The faculty have done everything they can to make this a premier program.

**(ii) You had had to leave mid-way through the program, to serve in Iraq.**

**(a) What kind of an impact did it have on you? Is there a particular instance/experience that you want to share with us? (i.e. serving in Iraq).**

I always knew there was a chance I would have to put my life on hold to serve my country. There were times when things got tough but the camaraderie that developed did wonders. I'll never forget the men with whom I served.

**(b) What made you want to come back to the program at MTSU?**

The opportunity to be involved in one of the top rated I/O programs was too much to turn down. During my time in Iraq I was able to reflect on the direction of my life and I kept coming back to the point of finishing what I started here at MTSU.

**(c) What were your feelings/thoughts, when you were coming back to MTSU? Did you have any apprehensions, if any? (about classes, new classmates, how you would fit into the new class, did you feel welcome?).**

I was able to stay in contact with Dr. McCarthy while in Iraq. Once I found out when I was coming home I let him know and he helped me transition back into the program. As soon as I returned I met with my current classmates and we hit it off very well. Everyone has been welcoming. It's been a true blessing. Classes haven't been too big of an adjustment. Compared to what I was doing, I love it!

**(iii) Do you find any changes/ difference in the program since you had left?**

I didn't find the program had changed too much. Enough time had lapsed that my initial group of peers had graduated so I was coming into a situation where I didn't know any of the students. The faculty had also grown with the addition of Dr. Brantley who I hear is a wonderful instructor and mentor.

**(iv) What are your career plans/goals as of now?**

I plan on graduating as soon as possible and working in Nashville for several years before branching out. So far I haven't really decided on a specific field but I'm very interested in working in a HR department specializing in compensation.

**Sage Advice**

Candice Marshall and some of our other recent graduates share their thoughts and reflect on their experiences at MTSU, and provide some advice to the next generation of students.

**Candice Marshall: Recent I/O graduate**

**(i) How was your experience at MTSU?**

I developed professional and personally during the past two years in the I/O Psychology program. My professors have had a sincere interest in seeing me succeed and helping me develop a well rounded skill set to prepare me for a career in I/O Psychology. We also had a diverse group of individuals in my class which has created a unique learning environment.

**(ii) How do you think the program has prepared you for a career in the field?**

I feel like I gained an overall strong foundation in I/O Psychology and Human Resources. My classes provided a well rounded combination of theory as well as practical knowledge. I was fortunate enough to gain applied experience through class projects, my Graduate Assistantship at the Center for Organizational and Human Resource Effectiveness (COHRE), and my practicum experience with The Alignment Group.

**(iii) Describe a worthwhile experience /opportunity that the program has offered you.**

The I/O Psychology program provided the opportunity for me to gain extensive applied experience. I gained valuable experience in consulting, training, and facilitation as a Graduate Assistant at COHRE. I was able to lead group facilitations, develop and present a training presentation, and developing a marketing brochure. In addition, my practicum with The Alignment Group provided me the opportunity to gain experience in project management, consulting, and training. Through my experience, I was able to creating interactive web-based training programs as well as lead a team as a project manager.

**(iv) Is there any message/advice that you would like to pass on to the next generation of students, incoming and current?**

My advice to incoming students is to take advantage of all the networking opportunities available to I/O students. Networking at conferences and professional meetings can provide excellent opportunities to learn from professionals in the field and make new connections. By networking at these events, you might even find a job or practicum.

Other recent graduates also reflected on the lessons learned, and the classes and experiences that had helped them the most.

“The biggest lesson that I have learned here is to juggle all the responsibilities. Also, being able to apply most of the stuff that we have learned but at the same time being flexible enough to realize that you cannot apply everything word by word” said Surabhi Supekar. Josh Martin added, “ The greatest lesson that I learned is to trust my knowledge and abilities.”

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**Candice Marshall**

**“If you want to change the way people respond to you, change the way you respond to people.”**

**—Timothy Leary**



**Surabhi Supekar**



Josh Martin

“Knowledge rests not upon truth alone, but upon error also.”

– Carl Jung.



The greater Nashville area offers many career opportunities for students and alumni of MTSU’s I/O program

When asked about who was the professor or class that helped them the most, Jodi Foura said, “ This has been a challenging and rewarding program. My thesis advisor, Dr. Van Hein helped me the most. Not only did she guide me through the thesis process, but she is an amazing teacher”. Josh adds, “ Working at COHRE has been very beneficial in allowing me to work on various projects and networking with HR professionals in the field. Dr. Moffett has been a tremendous influence for me in developing my skills as a young professional and providing guidance that will benefit me in my future career in Human Resources.”

Surabhi noted, “I think I learned a lot from my OD class. I also benefited a lot from the JA/PA class as well as from Training and Development. All of the professors at some time or the other in my time here have helped me through my problems.” Regarding advice to offer to the next generation of students, Surabhi said, “It’s a great program and there is a lot to learn if you have the intentions to. Just one thing, try and start working on your thesis as early as possible. I do not know how to stress on it enough. You would benefit if you begin early.”. Josh said “ Enjoy your time here and try to be involved in as many experiences as you can while you are here.”



Jodi Foura

**Class Projects: Where the Rubber Meets the Road**

*Continued from Page 4.*

These lessons came from a real-world experience also known as the group project.

Our client was The Holland Group. I had two fabulous second year students in my team: Nate Huddleston and Josh Martin. We were responsible for revamping the health benefits package as well as turning the interview training manual into a more interactive learning experience. A second team consisted of Demetria Holmes,

Kasia Urban, and Crystal Lee. This team collected data about new-hire training, analyzed the results, and presented the client with a great blueprint for future training areas.

Working under the tight time constraint, the two teams relied on what knowledge we had been given as well as the full support and guidance of our professor.

The client meetings were the most stressful for me because of the intense de-

sire to not only improve by gathering feedback, but also to show the client the best possible product regardless of the stage. Despite the stress, time limit, and constant feeling of treading water in the deep end, the project was completed on time and with praise from our client, peers, and professor. All involved in this project will never forget the experience and the lessons learned outside the classroom will forever remain.

I/O Newsletter Contributors

- Dr . Patrick McCarthy
- Shayna Hansen
- Kasia Urban
- Seth Thomas
- Jennifer Chambers
- Wes Wingo
- Candice Marshall
- Santoshi Patten



**INDUSTRIAL/ ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAM**  
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To I/O Alumni:

Please keep us informed of your life changes and other exciting news. We would love to share it in the next edition of our newsletter!

Please visit our website at:

<http://www.mtsu.edu/~iopsych>



Contact Information:

Our Master's program in Industrial/Organizational Psychology offers a wide range of courses and includes an emphasis on gaining applied experience. The courses and applied experiences are designed to prepare individuals for positions in human resource departments, consulting, or for entry into an I/O doctoral program.

For further information on the MTSU I/O program, you are welcome to contact Dr. Patrick McCarthy at (615) 898-2126 or [mccarthy@mtsu.edu](mailto:mccarthy@mtsu.edu).

