

Spartan STORIES

Our alumni are changing the world – in ways big and small – every day. Here’s what a few of them are doing, and their thoughts on life, work, and the impact of their Bryan School education.

LEARN MORE

go.uncg.edu/bbr_spartan_stories_2023

ACCOUNTING AND FINANCE

Never Stop Learning

When **Anthony Edwards** '09 (Finance) appeared in the Fall 2020 Bryan Business Report, he was just coming off his graduation from the Virginia Bankers School of Bank Management, hosted at the University of Virginia, and embarking on a new chapter at the Graduate School of Banking at Louisiana State University.

To say the least, he has been busy ever since. “I’ve heard before that to be successful you must always keep a student mindset. Never stop learning. Stay goal-oriented. Since my time at the Bryan School, I have continued watching for learning opportunities while staying open to tackling complex projects,” he says.

Alongside graduating from GSB-LSU and becoming a father (twice over), Edwards led the “Paycheck Protection Program” at Skyline National Bank during which his team deployed over \$125 million in critical funds to businesses during the pandemic. The team was mentioned in Forbes Digital Magazine for its efforts as a community bank.

Over the last 4 years, Edwards has served as a Vice-President in Credit Administration managing special projects and efficiency opportunities. He is now taking on the role of Senior Credit Risk Officer for the bank managing loan review and complex credit analysis. But unsurprisingly, he’s still looking ahead, preparing to begin pursuing his MBA in the next couple of years. Despite his forward momentum, Edwards refuses to forget his time at UNC Greensboro.

“My undergrad degree in Finance immensely prepared me for this role and my time before as a credit analyst, commercial lender, project manager, and credit administrator,” he said. Edwards also credits the Bryan School for instilling in him the importance of service to the community, another constant in his life. He has served on the leadership team and as a Financial Officer of the Junior Appalachian Musicians for more than a decade, as President of his Regional Chamber for more than 5 years and takes part in ministry work for his church through online outreach.



A finance degree from the Bryan School set my foundation for success. If this career path interests you, you’ll never regret your financial undergrad work at UNCG.”

Anthony Edwards
'09 (Finance)

CONSUMER, APPAREL, AND RETAIL STUDIES

Growth Opportunities

Morgan Weeks '13 (Consumer, Apparel, & Retail Studies) is always looking forward. For example, she always knew she wanted to work in the apparel and fashion industry.

"The CARS program in combination with it being local to the area where I grew up made the UNCG Bryan School an easy choice," she said. "The program allowed me to get a variety of courses and training within the industry and help me decide which area within the field I wanted to focus in."

This kind of thinking has remained true throughout her career. In her former position, she assisted in the launch of a kids' apparel line called Generation Joy, earning her a write up from Charlotte's WRAL. The line itself sounds futuristic, with WRAL describing its "grow with me" technology, cooling fabrics, cover stitching, and reversible construction.

In the months since, she's transitioned into a more digital marketing-centric role with Champion Activewear where she oversees social media channels and digital content creation.

"The most challenging thing, which is also rewarding in a way, is to know that perfection isn't the goal – progress is and there's always something new to learn in this industry," she said. When she takes a moment to look back, Weeks credits her CARS background for giving her the skills she's needed to remain nimble in her time as a professional, from studying abroad to visiting New York City as an undergrad to get a behind-the-scenes look at different facets of her industry.

"Soak up everything you have access to in college," she said. "Being able to take the core and elective CARS classes helped me get a variety of insights into roles across the industry."



The program allowed me to get a variety of courses and training within the industry and help me decide which area within the field I wanted to focus in."

Morgan Weeks
'13 (Consumer, Apparel, & Retail Studies)

INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

Finding a Second Home

After getting married and moving from India to North Carolina in 2017, **Sridevi Kesavarapu** '19 MS made the decision to pursue her M.S. in IT and Management. Through her research, she discovered that the Bryan School was known for its diversity, which prompted her to enroll.

"It was the best decision I have ever made," she said. Not only did Kesavarapu feel as though she belonged at Bryan, she also found the school's faculty and staff to be top-notch in helping her on our journey.

"I liked all of my professors. They were very friendly and encouraging. Out of everyone, my program director Ms. Apoorva Patipati Ramesh was my favorite. She encouraged me to participate in a Data Dive Challenge in which our team won second prize, and that challenge helped me to apply my analytical knowledge."



ECONOMICS

Icing on the Cake

When asked to describe what he does for a living, **Vincent Lorenz** '19 MA said his team's mission statement is to put data and insights at the heart of decision-making while utilizing data literacy and strategic thinking to guide the future of the organization. Lorenz's actual title? Manager, Data Ops & Business Analytics for the National Hockey League's Carolina Hurricanes.

"It's the type of thinking the Bryan School instilled in me," he says of his impactful, accurate analyses. "And it helps us, as a department, provide value to an NHL team. Pinch me, right?"

A Greensboro native, Lorenz considers himself lucky that he didn't have to travel halfway across the country to get his degree. He had everything he wanted in a graduate-level economics program right here in his hometown: intimate class size, strong funding packages for students, opportunities for assistantships, and a chance to be close to friends and family.

"I think my favorite memory of the Bryan School is just the relationships that I had with my professors. I wasn't really the type to speak with my professors or pick their brain as much as I should have as an undergraduate, so for me to turn over a new leaf and start to cultivate these relationships was incredibly fun and rewarding," he said. "Attending pre-semester parties at a professor's house or just talking shop was always a great time."

Lorenz says he's grateful to the Bryan School for equipping him with both the hard and soft skills needed to thrive in his career, despite the occasional untimely playoff exit.

"At the end of the day, we can never get too high or too low on the team as we all still have jobs to complete. For instance, after we dropped Game 4 to the Panthers (during the 2023 playoffs), we still had to come in and wrap up the season and everything was OK. One positive is that they're able to melt the ice which allows me to wear short-sleeved shirts again," he joked.



It's the type of thinking the Bryan School instilled in me. It helps us, as a department, provide value to an NHL team. Pinch me, right?"

Vincent Lorenz
'19 MA



Most people don't know how diverse UNCG is. For students with diverse cultural backgrounds, it's like a second home."

Sridevi Kesavarapu
'19 MS

ALUMNI



MANAGEMENT

A Foundation for Success

Kingsley Ibeh '15 (Business Administration) says his advice to students would be to think about an area of focus – and that doesn't mean spending every waking minute narrowing down exactly what they plan to do after their time at the Bryan School.

"Business Administration is flexible and can be used in many different ways. My concentration was in Human Resources, and I was fortunate enough to find opportunities while at UNC Greensboro that helped me gather working experience in the field," he said.

Ibeh's concentration decision – and the path that followed – has culminated in his current role of Employee Relations Partner for Google, LLC, based out of the company's Atlanta, Georgia offices. He supports Googlers across a wide variety of workplace concerns, specifically around Standards of Conduct violations.

For Ibeh, it was the Bryan School that helped lay the foundation that set him up for success in his career, whether it was attending Company Spotlight events, talking with his academic advisor, or even being chosen as class speaker for the May 2015 commencement ceremony.

"I am proud to be where I am today. I took a long path, but I am grateful for all the experiences that got me here. Looking back and reflecting on my time at Bryan – it was my professors and the undergraduate student office staff that made my experience special. The connections and lessons learned helped prepare me for life after UNCG."



I am proud to be where I am today. I took a long path, but I am grateful for all the experiences that got me here."

Kingsley Ibeh
'15 (Business Administration)

LETTER FROM THE BRYAN SCHOOL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT



FELLOW BRYAN SCHOOL ALUMNI,

As we settle into a long-awaited sense of normalcy, I am thrilled that we are now able to reconnect in person for sporting events, fundraisers, and meet-and-greets. It is with deep gratitude and honor that I assume the role of the 2023-24 Bryan School Alumni Association Board President.

My journey to the Bryan School was a long and winding road. The education I received and the networks I established during my time here continue to benefit me today. As a non-traditional student, I was married and working full time while pursuing my degree. Balancing these important roles would not have been possible without the support of teachers, fellow students, friends, and family, who remain the pillars I turn to when making important life decisions.

The Bryan School transformed my life by providing me with a clear path and a roadmap for my future. I have dedicated my time on the Bryan School Alumni Association board to giving back to this exceptional institution that has done so much for me, our community, and the countless students who have come before us.

The Bryan School Alumni Association is dedicated to serving all alumni of the Bryan School. Our aim is to foster meaningful

engagement opportunities and I welcome you to get involved and let us know how we can better serve each and every one of you.

To stay updated on our activities and find out how to engage with us, please follow us on social media. It is crucial to keep your contact information current so that we can ensure you stay informed about our latest initiatives. For any detailed inquiries, please don't hesitate to reach out to Madeleine Carey at mfcarey@uncg.edu.

In closing, I want to express my deep appreciation for the opportunity to serve as your President. Let's unite our collective strength and enthusiasm to propel the Bryan School Alumni Association to new heights, strengthening our bonds and empowering our fellow alumni.

Marimac McLendon '92 (Accounting)
2023-24 Bryan School Alumni Association Board President
mclendon@learnlivebe.com

MARKETING, ENTREPRENEURSHIP, HOSPITALITY & TOURISM

Dreaming Big

Looking back, **Casey Bright** '20 (Marketing), '23 MBA says she would have allowed herself to dream bigger.

"Starting out as a first-generation student, I thought I would be the outlier not being a student who lived on campus experiencing the traditional student life. For example, I never thought I could achieve an MBA – I thought that wasn't in the cards for me," she said. "But early on I found out there was a big community of hybrid learners, just like me, who understood my experience."

After earning a bachelor's in marketing, Bright set her sights on a master's in business administration, a program she found allowed her to further hone organizational skills and boundary setting. While learning to balance her life outside of school and work, Bright also got more involved on campus by becoming a graduate ambassador for the Bryan School.

"With unwavering support from my friends and family, I was able to take hold of an opportunity to keep moving and learning," she says. "When I look back on my MBA, graduation seemed light years away at the time – but it actually flew by. I got to work with some amazing companies. And I absolutely believe that my UNCG experience helped open important doors for me to get where I am now."

Earlier this year, Bright landed her dream role as a Digital Marketing Strategist at Pace, a Greensboro-based integrated marketing agency. Once again at the start of a new leg of her journey, she isn't putting any limits on herself this time.

"Marketing allows you to be creative and analytical. It gives you space to be able to work in any industry, so you aren't tied down. It pushes you to ask questions and grow. I truly learn something new and face new challenges every day," she says. "I'm truly so excited to see where my career takes me, I can't believe I made it to where I am today."



I get to work with some amazing companies who have a substantial global reach, and I absolutely believe that my UNCG experience helped open important doors for me to get where I am now."

Casey Bright
'20 (Marketing), '23 MBA