



SEPTEMBER

2025

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THE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

INSIDER



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Following the successful launch of the documentary film *No Risk, No Gain: The Sisters of Saint Francis of Philadelphia*, Neumann University has launched a film production company, to be housed in the School of Business, and directed by Sara McDermott.

The goals of the new venture are to gain recognition for the film department,



provide internship possibilities for students, and generate revenue.

“We are open to working with clients on all types and all lengths of films,” says McDermott. “We will also offer audio book production.” Sara may be reached at

MCDERMOS@neumann.edu

Neumann University School of Business Welcomes New Leadership



Neumann University is proud to announce the appointment of Najiba Benabess as the new Dean of the School of Business, joined by Julie Lanzillo as Associate Dean. Together, they bring a bold and innovative vision to guide the School of Business toward new heights of excellence.

Dean Benabess and Associate Dean Lanzillo are committed to enriching the student learning experience through innovative programs, hands-on opportunities, and forward-thinking strategies that prepare students for success in today's dynamic business world. Equally

important, they are dedicated to supporting and developing faculty, fostering a collaborative environment that encourages growth, creativity, and academic excellence.

“Our goal is to create an inspiring environment where students thrive and faculty excel,” said Dean Benabess. “By embracing innovation and cultivating strong partnerships, we aim to position the School of Business as a leader in business education.”

Lanzillo added, “I joined Neumann as a full-time faculty member in 2014, and my favorite part of the work has always been watching our students excel. That success begins with the passion and dedication of our faculty and staff. I am excited to support our team as we continue building the School of Business into a regional leader with a dynamic curriculum and a strong focus on student success and accomplishment.”



The School of Business also recognizes the invaluable support of its alumni and business partners. Your collaboration and engagement are essential to our success, and we warmly invite you to connect with us to explore opportunities for partnership, mentorship, and shared initiatives.

With this dynamic leadership team at the helm, the Neumann University School of Business is poised to empower students, strengthen faculty, and expand meaningful connections with the community and industry. For inquiries or to explore partnership opportunities, please contact the School of Business at benabesn@neumann.edu



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MATH COLLOQUIUM

Wednesday, October 22, 12:40pm (Virtual)

Dr. Nick Gorgievski, Lecturer at Bentley College in suburban Boston

Nicholas Gorgievski is a Lecturer in the Department of Mathematical Sciences at Bentley University. He holds a background in mathematics and applied statistics, with experience in both academic and professional settings. His work spans quantitative methods, data analysis, and the application of mathematical modeling to business and social science contexts. At Bentley, he contributes to the mathematical sciences curriculum and supports interdisciplinary initiatives that integrate mathematics with real-world problem solving. His academic and professional interests include applied mathematics, statistics, and fostering quantitative reasoning skills relevant to diverse fields. Thank you to Dr. David DiMarco for organizing this event.



GUEST SPEAKERS



SM 101 - Intro to Sport Management - Professor Bethany Ragua hosted **Chris Adams, Manager of Fan Development, Philadelphia 76ers**

ACT 315 - Advanced Accounting - Brinker Simpson Managing Partner **Michael Simpson, Neumann alumnus John Beck, Tax Supervisor, and Athena Putros, Senior Accountant,** visited Professor Denny Anastasia's class.

They discussed their career paths and shared insights into the different opportunities within the profession, including public accounting, corporate roles, government, non-profits, and entrepreneurial ventures.



Business School Grad Assistants Host Watch Party

This semester, the School of Business has five Graduate Assistants: Cecilia Mick, Tyler Kennedy, Liz Purcell, Emma Kensey, and Olivia Ammon. One of the priorities is for the group to plan and execute student-centered programming on campus. For the Philadelphia Eagles season opener, the GAs held a watch



party in Sora Luna Lounge, with free snacks and drinks. Over 100 students came through, with TVs playing inside and on the front patio. An Eagles win capped off the evening, and kicked off a new level of excitement on campus for fun, community-building events for all students.



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: MADDIE BIRKMIRE



Meet Maddie Birkmire, a junior in the School of Business majoring in Marketing with a minor in Sport Management. She is also working toward her Master's in Business Organizational Leadership through Neumann's accelerated program. Maddie credits Dr. Lanzillo and Professor Keller with having the biggest impact on her academic journey, inspiring her passion for business and leadership. Her favorite Neumann moments include her sports management classes and volunteering during freshman year for Cradles to Crayons, an experience that highlighted the value of giving back.

Beyond campus, Maddie demonstrates remarkable dedication. She works full-time as a restaurant manager and Teammate Ambassador, part-time with AWC Human Resources, and serves as a caregiver for her special needs sister, Tori. She also volunteers in her community, directing and coordinating middle school plays in her hometown. Maddie's commitment to learning, leadership, and service exemplifies the Neumann RISES spirit.



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NEW FACULTY: SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Brendan McCauley, Ph.D.

Brendan joins Neumann University from the University of Massachusetts - Amherst, where he completed his doctoral work and served as a lecturer. As an Assistant Professor in Neumann University's Communication & Digital Media program, Brendan's focus will be on content creation, digital and video production, and cinematography. Dr. McCauley also expressed how he appreciates that Neumann doesn't treat students as customers and how he wants to spend his time here helping students get their dream projects off the ground and finding an audience.



Aos Mulahuwaish, Ph.D.

Aos was an Associate Professor at Saginaw Valley State University in Michigan within the Department of Computer Science and Information Systems. His research interests are primarily in the area of data science, network science, social media analytics, text analytics, social cybersecurity, supervisory control of discrete-event systems (DES), and fault tolerance systems. He will be teaching Computer Information Systems, Data Analytics, Cybersecurity, and Computer Programming courses.

Bethany Ragusa, MPA

Bethany returns to her alma mater as a new Assistant Professor in Sport Management/Sport Business. A 2015 graduate of Neumann with a BS in Sport & Entertainment Management, Bethany spent the last ten years working in collegiate athletics at Prairie View A&M, Texas A&M, Chestnut Hill, and Jefferson University in an assortment of roles, ranging from student-athlete academic support to faculty member.



Aaron Talasnik, MS

Aaron has made the leap into higher education, after years in the sports and gaming industries, working with ESPN, NBC Sports Philadelphia, the Philadelphia 76ers, and Nerd Street. As an Assistant Professor, Aaron will be overseeing our esports classes and also bringing new life to our marketing major and minor. In addition, he will also be teaching in our undergraduate sport management and graduate sport business programs and serve as our Rocco and Mary Abessinio School of Business Chair in Management and Entrepreneurship.



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STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: SEAN CARROLL



A late great friend of mine by the name of Keith Foley once responded to me saying I'm a communication/digital media major with "so, in other words, you're undecided"; he could not have been more right. Graduating high school was one of the scariest moments of my life, I had no idea what I wanted to do. I, like most people, just wanted to make a difference somewhere in the world. Going in undecided didn't seem like the path to lead me in that direction, but communications peaked my interest-I mean, don't we all talk to one another? Digital media is also so important nowadays, it surrounds us.

The one major highlight from my time at Neumann must be, without a doubt, my sophomore year. When people say college is the best years of your life, they are

referring to what I experienced during my sophomore year. It was the year I got involved in my psych-minor, the year I started getting involved more in the media building, and the year I made a few special connections that I will surely never forget.

Neumann offers so many great activities that I have always tried to be a part of. Sean McDonald is great at giving the students opportunities, from very early on I tried getting involved with the media building, and if it weren't for him, I am not sure I would have wanted to be involved as much. I've loved going on the radio with my show "ITS OK" (now WE'RE NOT OK). It has been a lot of fun helping produce the philosophy radio show, "Leaving the Cave" as well. Something I have always wanted to tackle has been film and video. I've been involved with Knightflix, working on the first feature film the club ever created. I have only been successful in producing a few personal works-some comedy shorts here at Neumann, but I have a mirage of other ideas written down. That's mostly what I love to do. I love to write. I write a lot of poetry, I won the Delta Pi Writing Contest for poetry last year. I plan on entering again this year.

Picking a favorite professor is difficult, as so many come to mind. Dr. Hass, Dr. Glass, Prof. Hustwit, Dr. Chakars just to name a few. But as I sift through the multitude of great professors here at Neumann, my mind goes right to Professor O'Malley. I had her for my ASL class, Disability in Film Class, and Deaf Studies in film class. She has helped open my eyes to the world in ways that not a lot of other people could. Her wisdom means a lot to me. If it weren't for her, I would not have gotten the much-needed exposure to certain sides of humanity.

If I could be honest for a second, I was completely dumbfounded when I first received the invitation to be featured in this newsletter. I actually think I froze for a few minutes after reading the email asking if I wanted to be a part of this. Not only was I now tasked with reflecting on what I have done, but how me, a communication major (with a psych and film studies minor) was connected to business. And I would be lying to you if I told you I was able to figure it out quickly. I mean, what have I done that actually involves business? I have been involved in a film club, some radio shows, and been a part of the production team at Neumann, but that to me didn't scream "business". So what does? To me, its connectivity. The whole essence of humanity is to connect. It is the major reason social media is as prominent as it is. While I might not be able to do a spreadsheet or understand the ins and outs of business, I feel my practices have led me to be able to truly connect with anyone. And that is powerful. While it is popular to hear "business is business, not personal", I believe all business has a personal element to it. And if someone is able to see where that personal element is, you could make a great deal in the realm of business.



NEUMANN SCHOOL OF BUSINESS ON LINKEDIN

The School of Business at Neumann University has launched a LinkedIn group. Please search for "Neumann University School of Business" and request to join. We are using that digital space to highlight partners, faculty, board members, job and internship opportunities, and of course the great work our students are doing, in and outside of the classroom.



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