



The EMBA Difference

By Elizabeth M. Economou

To say earning an Executive Masters in Business Administration (EMBA) was a “game changer” for Justine Smith is an understatement. The founder and CEO of Kids Go Company, the Bainbridge Island–based maker of Zoomkit, a portable activity table for kids, credits the online MBA program from Washington State University’s Carson College of Business for helping her succeed.

“I was repeatedly hitting my own glass ceiling,” Smith says. “I felt blocked by my lack of training and tools, and I didn’t have the capacity to create a scalable business model or knowledge of financial networks.”

An aspiring entrepreneur when she started the program, Smith had reservations about WSU’s exclusively online program, due to what she imagined would be limited interaction with peers and professors. However, those concerns turned out to be unfounded.

“I looked at a lot of programs, but WSU’s EMBA had a great carousel format that allowed me to jump right into the program on a midyear cycle,” she says.

She soon realized that the online aspect of WSU’s program afforded her great flexibility. In fact, the courses can be taken

from anywhere students have an Internet connection, says Cheryl Oliver, assistant dean for online and graduate programs.

“We have students from all over the world,” Oliver says. She notes that EMBA students are involved in a wide variety of industries and fields, including alternative energy, aerospace, banking, the military, medicine and more.

Such a flexible approach—along with evening classes designed for working professionals—gave Smith, a small-business owner at the time, the security of knowing that the program could adapt to her busy work schedule.

Smith also was drawn to WSU’s offerings for their focus on entrepreneurship. “It seemed like the missing puzzle piece,” she says.

Despite a strong background in marketing and branding, Smith realized she lacked insight into corporate financing, forecasting, statistics and ROI (return on investment) analysis—knowledge she felt she needed to grow her international company, Kids Go Company.

Since graduating from the program in 2013, Smith has been making the most of her EMBA. She launched her main product, Zoomkit, which is now available in more than 140 stores across the nation and on Amazon.com. The business plan Smith developed during her EMBA course work served as the template for founding her company.

“Our mission is designing innovative products to create moments of calm and structure for today’s on-the-go families,” she says. Smith’s innovation sprang from her own experiences as a time-strapped working mother of three young children.

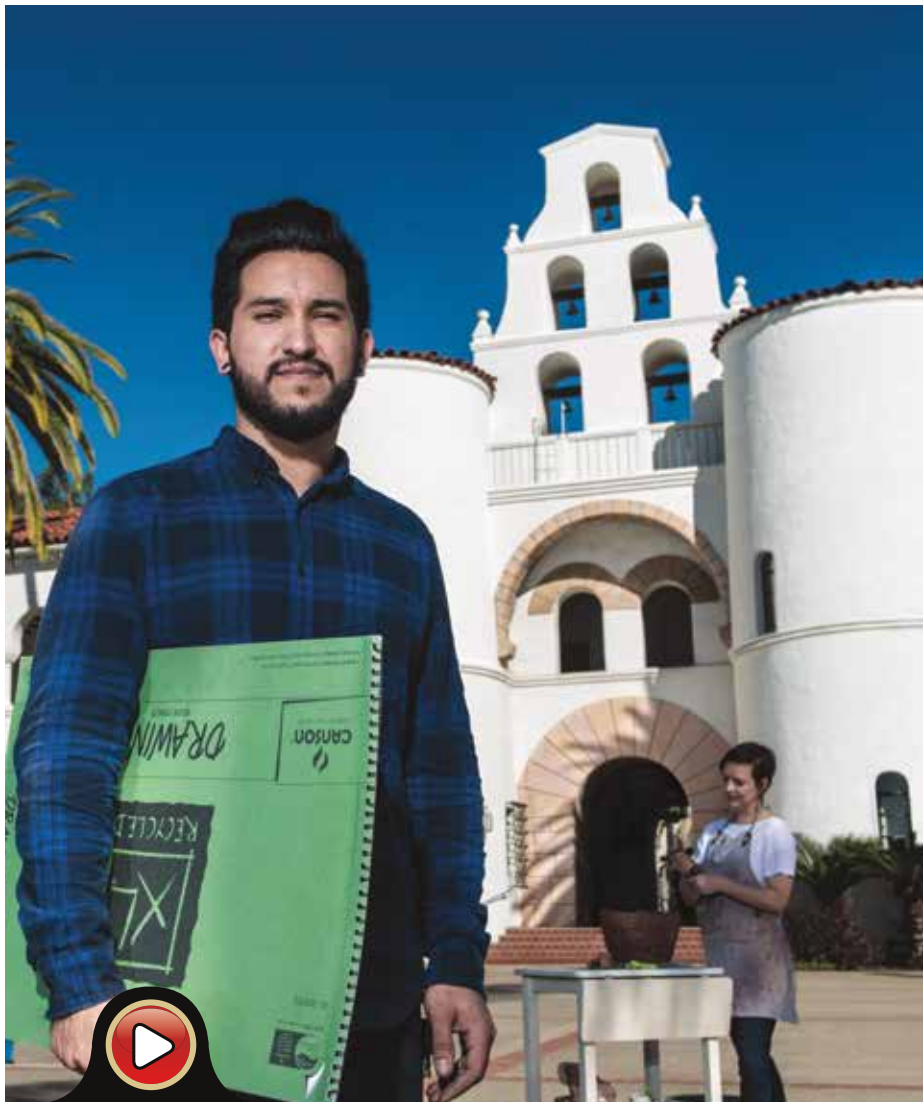
Smith is one of about 20,000 professionals nationwide who have taken time in their busy lives to enter EMBA programs each year, according to the national Executive MBA Council (EMBAC).

EMBAs are education programs designed to help managers and corporate executives learn innovative management techniques and best practices they can use to start companies and help them grow, develop and run more efficiently. The programs are designed to enable working professionals to take the courses without interrupting their careers.

Besides learning important business-leadership techniques, developing a treasure trove of new skills and joining a network of like-minded peers, EMBA graduates also gain newfound confidence.

Randell Hernandez, associate director of the Executive MBA program at the University of Washington’s Foster School of Business in Seattle, says many factors drive working professionals to pursue EMBAs, including learning skills that will help graduates add value to their companies.

“The ability to make better strategic



creativity starts here

Our beautiful design inspires their beautiful designs.

The arts are alive at San Diego State University with more than 350 creative and performing arts experiences on campus each year. Science, engineering and arts faculty collaborate to create interdisciplinary courses and expand our arts-rich educational community. SDSU.edu



SAN DIEGO STATE
UNIVERSITY

Leadership Starts Here

EDUCATION

decisions and develop high-performing teams adds value to any organization,” Hernandez says.

Finding the right program

The EMBA movement, which has been around for decades, continues to grow and evolve. In the 1960s, there were an estimated 11 programs nationwide.

Today, experts say, there are more than 300 Executive MBA programs found around the world.

The increase in the number of programs “serves as a testament to their value in meeting the organizational thirst for leadership development,” says Michael Desiderio, the executive director of the EMBAC, which advances the cause of MBAs and shares information and best practices about programs.

According to the council, the average total program cost for an EMBA (based on 2015 survey results) runs about \$75,000, including deposit, tuition and additional fees.

Many MBAs also include an international trip, which may be part of the cost of the program. The trips can be anywhere in the world. Smith, for example, traveled to China.

“This was a very important aspect of the program,” she says. “I regularly use many of the skills from that journey and the intensive workshops while working with our factories, supply chains and import-export logistics.”

Each EMBA program is different, and officials say it is important that interested students find the right program that fits their needs.

The University of Washington’s Foster School of Business EMBA program, for instance, emphasizes that it is located in Seattle, a strong entrepreneurial center that is home to such innovative companies as Amazon.com, Costco, Microsoft and Nordstrom.

Being set in the midst of this technology-friendly business environment allows for unique knowledge-sharing and net-

Pontic
SEAFOOD GRILL

Wild fish only since 1989

Owner Richard Malia works with local fishermen serving the very highest quality seafood. Chef Alvin Binuya is by far the best seafood chef in Seattle

Located on the Ship Canal near the Fremont Bridge
3014 3RD AVE N SEATTLE | 206-284-3000 | PONTIGRILL.COM

working opportunities. Hernandez says the UW's strong brand recognition—locally, nationally and globally—also helps the program distinguish itself.

San Diego State University is known for its small class sizes, ideal for collaboration, and also offering many tools to help students succeed. EMBA Program Director Patricia van Damme likens the SDSU classroom to a “laboratory and think tank” where busy professionals learn and grow with their peers who have similar goals. Program amenities include incubators for startups, a financial markets lab with Bloomberg Terminals and career services.

Tim Ney, a 2014 graduate of SDSU, was employed in the role of chief operations officer for a hunger relief organization when he embarked on his EMBA.

“The Executive MBA program has made a tremendous impact on my personal and professional life,” Ney says. “I’ve been able to create new friendships that I can depend on throughout my career; to understand how to research problems to find solutions, and make a positive impact for my organization and our staff.”

After vetting several programs, Ney settled on the one offered by SDSU. Meeting alumni as well as Director of Graduate Programs Nikhil Varaiya is what sealed the deal for him. “He walked us through a model company from startup to IPO [initial public offering]. I found this interesting and practical, which is why I chose to attend San Diego State University.”

Ney credits his EMBA for helping him to land a new role as the executive director of the San Diego Armed Services YMCA.

“I have reduced expenses, increased net revenue and improved the organization’s culture dramatically,” Ney says.

Van Damme is not the least bit surprised with Ney’s success following his EMBA degree. “The alumni network is one of our greatest assets,” she says. “It’s

WORLD RANKED BROKER


Premier OR & WA Broker

**Real Estate
 EXPERT
 with proven
 RESULTS!**



**GET LISTED!
 GET SOLD!**

**#1
 Broker
 Pacific NW**

**#18
 Broker
 in the USA**

**#59
 Broker
 in the WORLD!**
 RE/MAX equity group

Text/Call 360.607.4100 • 888.888.8284 • Terrie@TerrieCox.net

USA-RELOCATE.com



**Dream
 Big**

BCconted.com

Achieve dreams and goals through individual courses and professional certificates at Bellevue College Continuing Education.

For corporate leaders, we provide training through our Business Training Institute.

Courses are designed for busy professionals and taught by industry leaders.

Make your career dreams a reality with us.

 **BELLEVUE
 COLLEGE**
 CONTINUING EDUCATION



NORTON SOUND
Health Corporation

Bring your talents to Western Alaska

APPLY NOW
877.538.3142
We are seeking: CNAs, RNs, mid-levels, physicians & pharmacists.

- Competitive Wages
- Generous Benefits
- Hiring Bonuses

Exceptional People, Extraordinary Care

CONTACT RHONDA: rmschneider@nshcorp.org
NSHC is an equal opportunity employer affording native preference under PL93-638. AA/M/F/D. We are a Drug Free Workplace and background checks are required for all positions.

VISIT: www.nortonsoundhealth.org

CAPO BY THE SEA 800-722-2650
www.capobythesea.com

DRUG & ALCOHOL TREATMENT

Experienced Professionals
Our facility's staff includes several highly qualified, experienced therapists.


Custom Programs
7-10 day detox, 30-180 day programs. Guaranteed success with the 90 day program, call for details.

Privacy Assured
All communications are confidential, before, during and after recovery.

PRIVATE ROOMS AVAILABLE • INSURANCE FRIENDLY • BEACHSIDE LOCATIONS • PET FRIENDLY

ADDICTION • ALCOHOL • COCAINE • METHAMPHETAMINE • OXYCONTIN • VICODIN





At the heart of all Amouage creations is a signature accord that cultivates the ultimate luxury of being unique and distinctive. Amouage offers niche fragrances for both women and men namely: Gold, Silver, Ciel, Jubilation, Lyric, Reflection, Epic, Dia, Memoir, Honour, and The Library Collection.

AMOUAGE
THE GIFT OF KINGS

Please call
Parfumerie Nasreen
in the lobby of the Alexis Hotel
at (206) 682-3459 or
1-888-286-1825
contact@parfumerienasreen.com
or visit
www.parfumerienasreen.com
1005 1st Ave. Seattle, WA
98104

EDUCATION

rare to find a major company in San Diego that does not employ one or more SDSU EMBA graduates.”

Since completing his EMBA in 2014, Ney has been offered a few high-level positions and has been recruited to serve on the nonprofit advisory boards for the San Diego Food Bank and the Continuous Improvement board for the University of California San Diego Extension, he says. Ney believes his EMBA degree has helped him develop the confidence to succeed.

Continually evolving

A reflection of how EMBA programs are adapting to changing times can be seen at Oregon State University, where students who are enrolled in the Executive Leadership MBA program are involved in hybrid learning.

According to Mitzi Montoya, the dean of the College of Business, students complete 80 percent of their work online whenever it's convenient for them, and meet in person with faculty and classmates for six hours per course term.

“Most EMBA's use a cohort model [in which group members meet, usually in a classroom], which we consider to be outdated in meeting the needs of rising professionals who want to connect with a wide range of peers to build a broad and deep network,” she says.

Other ways EMBA programs are evolving, according to the EMBA's Desiderio, include an increase in elective courses, the development of industry-focused programs, and the emergence of a global Executive MBA. As the workforce continues to globalize and evolve with emerging technologies, professionals equipped with EMBA's will be better positioned to fill gaps in skills and leadership, says Desiderio.

“Graduates can immediately implement the practices learned during their program and apply them to real-world situations,” he adds. “The important thing is to immediately apply lessons

learned—in order to reap the rewards.”

However, graduates acknowledge that not all professionals may be cut out for the rigors of an EMBA program. Ideal candidates must have the drive and discipline to put their social lives on hold for about 22 months, knowing that the payoff could be huge, says van Damme.

“You must have support and stamina,” adds Smith.

For Ney, it comes down to this: “An EMBA will change the way you think,” he says. “I now have the ability to view problems and opportunities from a much wider lens, all the while helping to create a positive culture that leads to sustainable growth.” And most would agree that’s priceless. ▲

Elizabeth M. Economou writes on health care, education, real estate and finance.

BY THE NUMBERS

20,000

Approx. number of EMBA students enrolled in any given year.

37.8

The **average age** of EMBA students.

13.9

Average number of **years of prior work experience** for EMBA students.

230

Number of **colleges and universities** included by the Executive MBA Council (EMBAC) worldwide, administering 300-plus programs in more than 30 countries.

41%

Students who entirely **self-fund** their EMBA.

\$74,705

Average EMBA **program cost**.

27.6%

Women in EMBA programs.

According to the EMBAC 2015 survey results



Now in Seattle.

Furthering our commitment to the Pacific Northwest.

For nearly four decades, Becker Capital has provided discretionary value-based investment management services while remaining committed to our independent and employee-owned structure.

Today, Becker Capital employs 29 individuals to manage approximately \$3 billion* in assets from our offices in Portland and Seattle. With over 25 years average industry experience and 14 years at the firm, our stable investment team conducts bottom-up fundamental research to construct portfolios for institutional and private wealth clients.

*As of 12/31/2015

1201 Third Ave Suite 5030, Seattle, WA 98101 • 206-829-7747

WWW.BECKERCAP.COM

© 2016 Becker Capital Management

Two gripping novels about the perilous intersection between man and nature...



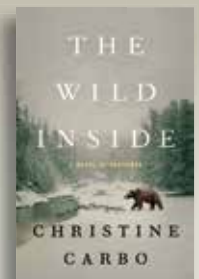
ON SALE MAY 31ST

Recommended reading by *The Chicago Tribune*.

“Evocative debut....Carbo paints a moving picture of complex, flawed people fighting to make their way in a wilderness where little is black or white, except the smoky chiaroscuro of the sweeping Montana sky.” —*Publishers Weekly*

“A tour de force of suspense that will leave you breathlessly turning the pages late into the night.” —*Linda Castillo, New York Times bestselling author*

“A study of flawed, compelling characters and the ghosts that haunt them.... This novel works on so many levels, all of them masterfully crafted!” —*William Kent Krueger, New York Times bestselling author*



ON SALE NOW

BLINDS & MORE

#FINDBOOKS

AND OTHER MAJOR AND INDEPENDENT BOOKSELLERS

PROUDLY PUBLISHED BY ATRIA BOOKS / SIMON & SCHUSTER