

## Guest Speakers talk about Entrepreneurship

Willing to take risk? If so Entrepreneurship might be right for you.

By: Dr. Victoria Salin and MAB students Thiago Parente & Lydia Mante

During the September Entrepreneurship Panel, students shared their ideas about running their own business and learned about reaching their goals from four experts in entrepreneurship.

Jeffrey Peterson earned a MBA in Management from the Johnson School of Management at Cornell University. Peterson has worked for Monsanto and is now one of the General Partners at The Yield Lab.

Blair Richardson earned a Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Economics at TAMU and is the President and CEO of the United States Potato Board.

Caleb Holt has a Master of Agribusiness degree, class '09. Holt is the Manager of the Product Development Center at Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service.

Madhu Jamallamudi is also a graduate of the Master of Agribusiness program, class '03, and the founder/CEO of Agrometrics. He also works as the Director of Business Intelligence for the Wysocki Family Companies.

Joining the panel by Skype, Peterson, focused on explaining the company's agriculture base. The Yield Lab is looking for start-up companies in the agriculture industry to fund while offering mentorship and coaching programs. The idea of the company is to move a start-up toward the venture funds.

Richardson reminisced about the early Internet boom start-ups and how during that time he helped to found an online exchange for California agricultural produce. Richardson believes that one can be both an employee and entrepreneur.

Today Richardson runs his own farm-tourism-equestrian business. Richardson pointed out that too much outside funding can actually harm a start-up. In his experience, one key to success has been to pace the growth of his company to a scale that he can control in terms of management and funding.

Taking over his first company while studying in the MAB program Holt discovered that, "The farmer is the original entrepreneur."

Holt believes that an entrepreneur should be passionate about his business and at the same time humble about it. In his current work, Holt supports CEOs that are facing the dilemma of crossing over from "inventor to entrepreneur" as the two are very different.

Jamallamudi recalled his first steps to entrepreneurship, sharing stories of his transition from India to the TAMU MAB program. Jamallamudi ultimately started an importing company that would import artwork from India to the United States.

Learning from this experience Jamallamudi shared that "What you know is as important as who you know." Jamallamudi also explained networking and how "Your networks can make a big difference in the outcome of new ventures."

Now the founder and CEO of the successful Agrometrics, Jamallamudi closed with "Even if you don't plan on pursuing your own business, companies are seeking employees with entrepreneur capabilities and creativity."



MAB students ask Jeffrey Peterson questions.



Dr. Victoria Salin, Richardson, Holt, Jamallamudi and current MAB students

## Women in Agribusiness

By: Chelsea Miller and current MAB Marcela Valdes

Dr. Victoria Salin, and current MAB Students Marcela Valdes and Natalia Anez traveled to the Women in Agribusiness summit held October 6 - 8 in New Orleans, Louisiana.

This three day trip included networking, key note speakers and skill development classes.

Valdes spoke about her time listening to particular key note speaker Krysta Harden, Deputy Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Harden spoke about how the next generation of agricultural leaders, with a focus on women, can be successful in helping America continue to feed the world and maintain a strong agriculture economy. Harden also briefly discussed the implementation of the new Farm Bill.

Valdes shared, "She was a really insightful speaker, she shared some very great pointers about being a woman in such a big company. She has truly inspiring stories that will help me to better make decisions about not only my career but also as a leader."

Each day of the conference had coffee breaks where the attendees could chat with speakers in a casual setting. Valdes said, "The coffee breaks were definitely a great way to break the ice and meet new people in the industry, it was great opportunity to have the chance to network with such influential and inspiring women."

Next year the Women in Agribusiness summit will be held September 28 - 30, 2015 in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

## Guest Chris Narayanan—

Director of agricultural commodity research at Societe Generale.

By: Chelsea Miller, current MAB students Andrew Buch and Alex Bardequez

Chris Narayanan, Director and Head of Agricultural Commodities Research for Societe Generale came to speak to Dr. Victoria Salin's Financial Analysis for Agribusiness Firms class on October 9. He spoke about his experience in analyzing and trading agricultural and soft commodities.

Current MAB student Andrew Buch said, "Chris' visit was exactly what I have been hoping for from the MAB program in that he exemplifies a career path that combines all that we are learning about in agriculture and economics with the capital markets and international trade. I was really grateful for his visit and I hope we can continue to place a focus on this element of agribusiness."

Having held positions in agribusiness, commodity, brokerage, hedge funds, and investment banks Narayanan gave helpful insight to the MAB students.

Current student Alex Bardequez said, "Actively seeking possibly a position in trading futures and commodities, I truly enjoyed Chris' visit with our program. Chris was able to give us some valuable insight into some of the other careers that are available in the industry. I also was able to gain more knowledge about how a person conducts their research and makes predictions about different commodities."



Chris Narayanan during lecture.



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## Latinos in Agriculture Seeking Leaders

By: Alonso Villaran, current MAB student

Latinos in Agriculture Leaders Conference is an opportunity to meet other students and professionals from the Ag sector and increase your network.

You will find recruiters from companies and universities sharing their point of view about how students should exploit one's talent and internship opportunities to assure a successful professional career.

Additionally, through interactive talks and discussion panels you are able to know from first-hand experiences the challenges that other professionals have seen within their career paths.

With their feedback I became more aware of the skills and abilities I should focus on and, furthermore, being exposed to recruiters in academia, industry and government reinforce your communication skills in order to deliver an effective speech.

I encourage the Latino academic community to join this movement which has been created with the purpose of helping students to build a better future. My special thanks to Edward W. Romero, PhD. Co-Founder and Organizer.



Current MAB Students, Ramses Gonzales, and Alonso Villaran with (middle) Edward W. Romero.

## Industry Leaders Forum— Sustainability

By: Chelsea Miller and current MAB student Kade Beck

Wednesday, October 15, the MAB program welcomed Markus Frank, BASF Team Leader and Chris Owens, Americold Vice President to campus to discuss Sustainability.

Each speaker gave a brief presentation about their company and top-of-mind issues pertaining to sustainability initiatives. The leaders followed their segments with a question and answer panel.

Frank spoke briefly on his experience with sustainability assessment tools like BASF's AgBalance®. Owens wrapped the information session up with his take on the food supply chain and the flow of goods from "field to shelf."

MAB student Kade Beck commented on the guest speakers with: "Chris gave good insight into exactly what takes place in a cold warehouse of that magnitude and size, and what the company has become more efficient in cutting down costs and wasted energy in keeping the warehouses cold."

Beck said, "Markus explained how BASF has kind of a four part sustainability program including environmental and social. The forum was a very enjoyable opportunity to speak with leaders and on the importance of sustainability moving forward."



Above: Dr. Victoria Salin, current MAB students with guest speakers Markus Frank and Chris Owens at George Bush Library



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## INCAE, Costa Rica, Study Abroad

A global experience while learning

By: Chelsea Miller

INCAE is one of the leading business schools in Latin America, with campuses in Costa Rica and Nicaragua. It specializes in masters programs and education programs through seminars for executives throughout the region.

This study abroad Sustainability Seminar is designed to familiarize you with global environmental challenges businesses face, especially in the Latin American context, and to provide you with tools to deal with those challenges.

Issues discussed:

- What is the threat posed by global climate change and other environmental problems?
- To what extent can market mechanisms be relied upon to deal with these problems?
- To what extent can the environment be a core competency in an organization?
- What is the case for corporate sustainability?

Learning outcomes:

- You will be able to articulate verbally many of the complex relationships between the natural environment and competitiveness of the firm.
- You will be able to identify leading companies and industry subsectors that are involved in environmental issues and response to those issues.

When: January 5 – 16th, 2015, Winterm 1

If you are interested and want to know more please contact:

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### Coming Soon

This December, we will be releasing the first Graduation Newsletter for the Masters of Agribusiness program.

This newsletter will highlight all of our graduates and share their achievements and where their degrees will be taking them.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

December 19: MAB Graduation

### **Howdy 2015!**

January 5-16: INCAE Costa Rica, Study Abroad

January 12 - February 2: CME Trading

Challenge

January 15: Application Deadline for Global

Food Security Symposium 2015

January 19: Martin Luther King Holiday

January 20: First day of Spring Semester

January 29 – 31: University Private Equity Summit

March 16-20: Spring Break

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