



SOBEY BUILDING

# SOBEY SCHOOL OF BUSINESS COMMUNITY REPORT 2019-2020

---



SAINT MARY'S  
UNIVERSITY

## LETTER FROM THE DEAN

**"THIS PAST YEAR, WE HAVE EXPERIENCED MANY UNEXPECTED CHALLENGES, BUT WE HAVE ALSO SEEN MANY INCREDIBLE ACHIEVEMENTS."**

The Sobey School of Business has a long history of being the school of choice for the next generation of business leaders. This past year, we have experienced many unexpected challenges, but we have also seen many incredible achievements.

The COVID-19 pandemic has kept us apart physically but has also helped us create new ways to come together safely in a virtual environment. Though much has changed, our drive to respond, learn, succeed and grow has remained constant and continues to guide us to elevate our impact.

This brings me to the title of our new strategic plan -- Elevating Impact. This plan will help us carve our path by taking our theme of "impact with purpose" to the next level. It focuses on encour-

aging our people to work in meaningful ways to achieve the strategic goals of connecting, discovering and advancing. It guides us to connect by engaging with our community to address issues of local and global significance. It pushes us to discover by continuing to foster an environment that inspires excellence, encourages collaboration and serves society. It directs us to advance by enabling greater student engagement and success by prioritizing transformative learning experiences, keeping social responsibility and intercultural perspectives top of mind. It reminds us that fostering creative and entrepreneurial mindsets is what makes our university a leader in the world of entrepreneurship.

In September, our students were welcomed back to the Saint Mary's community in a virtual capacity, making it an

academic year like no other. Through the support of our dedicated faculty, diligent staff and generous donors, we have been able to keep our students learning and on track for success, innovating and shaping our institution for the better. My deepest thanks for choosing to work, study and invest in our school.

This report shares a few of the many ways our community has come together to connect, discover and advance, making positive change in a time when we need it most.

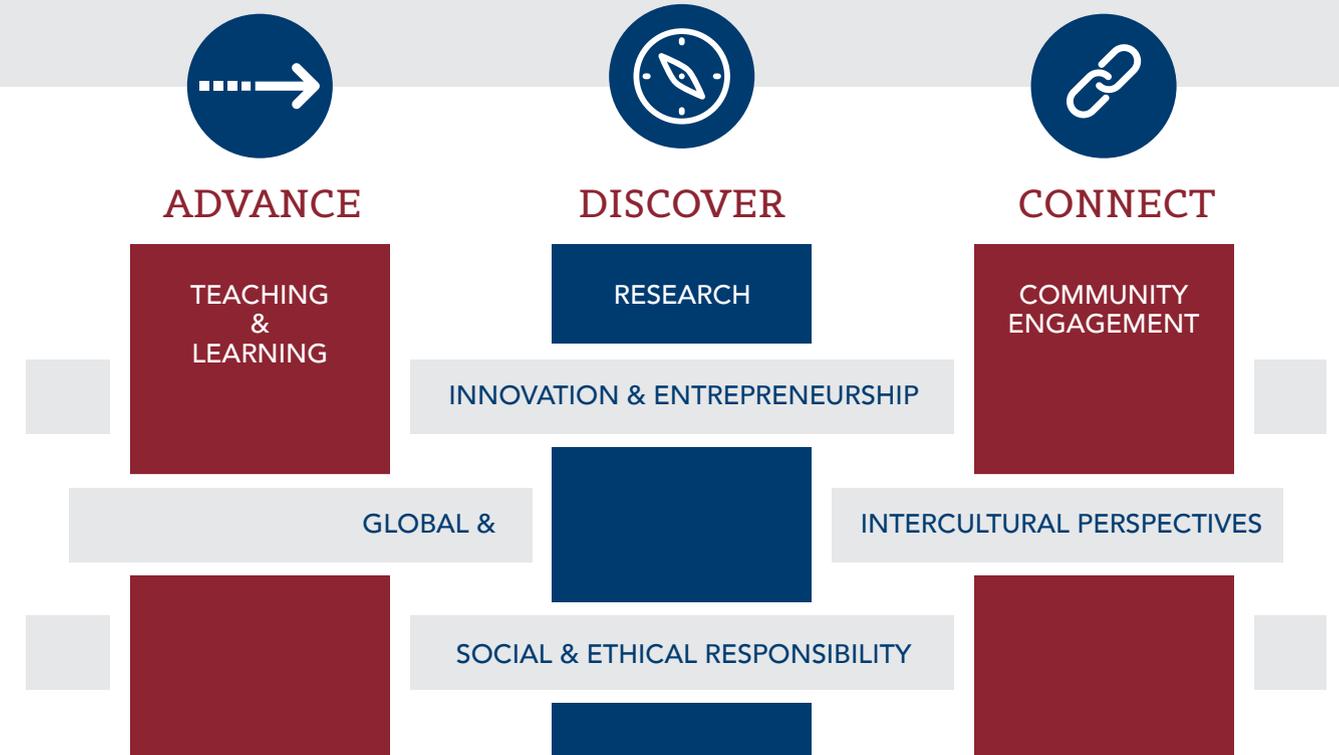
**Dr. Harjeet S. Bhabra**  
Dean, Sobey School of Business

## Elevating Impact

In the past year, the Sobey School of Business introduced a new five-year strategic plan (2020-25). Its theme, Elevating Impact, will help us navigate the future, positioning the strategic goals of advance, discover and connect as guiding themes as we move forward.

Much thought, analysis and consultation went into its development and we are grateful to everyone who contributed to its creation and are excited to work with students, staff, faculty, alumni and community stakeholders in its implementation. Through the process, our Strategy Weave was created to depict the components of the plan. Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Global and Intercultural Perspectives and Social and Ethical Responsibility are woven through our business education pillars of teaching and learning, research and community engagement. Each component is interconnected, equally important and when woven together, elevate impact.

Throughout this community report, you will notice goal icons connected to each story that aim to identify the strategic goals our work is supporting. The past year was unique in its challenges, and the Sobey School of Business kept the community close, remained strategic and delivered on elevating impact.

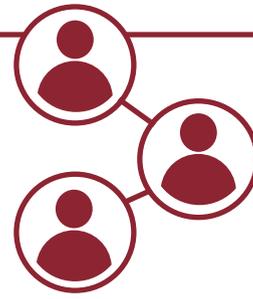


# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## Creating connection during uncertain times

Saint Mary's University has a long-standing reputation of utilizing its expertise to contribute to the community at large. In July 2020, we unveiled the **Sobey School of Business Community Revitalization & Prosperity Network** ([sobey.school.prosperitynetwork.com](http://sobey.school.prosperitynetwork.com)). Bringing together academic experts from the school and industry experts from the community, the network fosters a resilient community of innovation and support for Nova Scotia's businesses and communities. It also provides free resources to the business community including expert advice, webinars, blog posts, discussion papers and special events.

Each of these efforts are rich in information and aim to help the business community push through the challenges of the pandemic and focus on pandemic recovery. The pandemic has changed the way we work, and it will fundamentally change the fabric of the economy. Businesses are figuring out how to adapt to the new post pandemic economy, the Community Revitalization & Prosperity Network will continue to create value with its academic and industry Partners.



"The combination of a public health and economic crises is unlike anything we've seen in the past 100 years. The challenges were far greater for Atlantic Canadian economies due to their reliance on traditional sectors like main-street retail, hospitality, seafood and agriculture. The novelty of the crisis and the monstrosity of its impact required a combined effort from all levels of society to chart a clear path forward for our region."

- Dr. Mohammad M. Rahaman

Mohammad M. Rahaman is PhD Canada Research Chair (CRC) in International Finance & Competitiveness, associate dean, strategic partnerships & community engagement, associate professor of finance & coordinator for the Global Business Management Program, Sobey School of Business, Saint Mary's University.

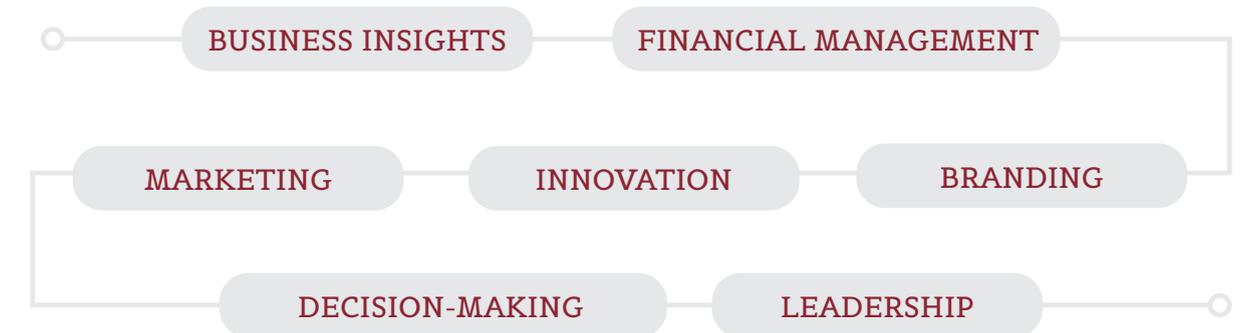


## Supporting retail revitalization through the pandemic

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit in March 2020, many retailers were faced with closures of non-essential business. Since then, retailers are still dealing with low consumer traffic despite restrictions starting to lift. Recognizing a need to support the sector, the **David Sobey**

**Centre for Innovation in Retailing and Services** moved quickly to share its expertise to the struggling Atlantic Canada retail sector. In June, they launched **RISE Again Retail: Retail Innovation, Strategy & Innovation in a Pandemic**.

THIS SIX-MODULE PROGRAM FOCUSES ON HELPING SMALL BUSINESSES SUCCESSFULLY NAVIGATE THE CHALLENGES POSED BY THE PANDEMIC AND INCLUDES THEMES SUCH AS



RISE (RETAIL INNOVATION, STRATEGY AND EXCELLENCE) IS THE DAVID SOBEY CENTRE'S FLAGSHIP EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR RETAIL EXECUTIVES AND MANAGERS.

## Coming together to build a more equitable and inclusive world of finance

This fall, the Sobey School of Business invited individuals working in the business and finance sectors to join a day-long virtual event to discuss change and the future of the financial services industry. Discussions included the history of the sector which often found women working in service-type roles such as tellers while men saw their careers take-off in areas such as wealth management and capital markets on a path to the corner office.

The event's mission was to focus on building a more equitable and inclusive field in financial services, while helping support all women by building community. "We need to be courageous in these conversations. We need to get uncomfortable in order

to make good change," said, Karn Nichols MBA'11, Manager of SSB Graduate Career Services & Chair of Women in Business Steering Committee. Attendees were able to connect with potential mentors and hear from experts in streams dedicated to women and diversity in financial services, fintech, venture capital financing and corporate social responsibility. The keynote speaker was Catherine Philogène, CIM, RIPC, Vice President, Product Management, RBC Global Asset Management Inc.

The event had 263 attendees, with all net proceeds being distributed to Immigrant Migrant Women's Association of Halifax, a not-for-profit organization that supports women in business.



## INNOVATION & ENTREPRENEURSHIP



### Dr. Robert Steele's \$2 million gift will inspire entrepreneurship

In November, the Sobey School of Business announced a \$2 million gift to the Master of Technology Entrepreneurship and Innovation (MTEI) program from Halifax entrepreneur, Dr. Robert Steele DComm'18. Through Dr. Steele's generosity, the program will be able to double its size and launch three major initiatives over the next decade.

- **The Steele MTEI scholarship** will support students in the MTEI program to achieve their dreams of being an entrepreneur by allowing them to focus on building the skills needed to become successful innovators.
- **The Steele Entrepreneurship Awards** will be awarded to MTEI student entrepreneurs who are in the earliest stages of starting new businesses, providing them with support they need to get their ideas to market.
- **The Steele Professorship in Entrepreneurship in the Sobey School of Business** is a new professorship that will provide additional capacity and support to expand and broaden entrepreneurship research intensity at the Sobey School.

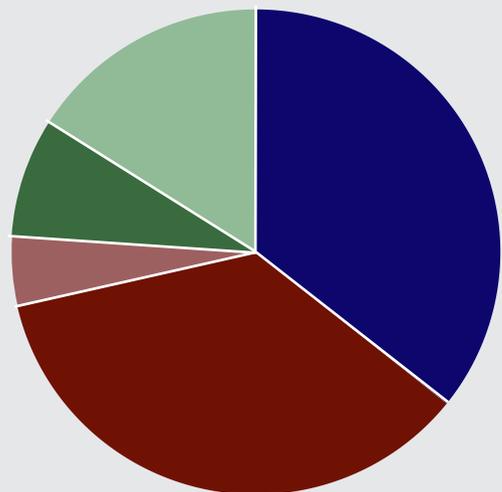


The MTEI program was established six years ago. It is a comprehensive, cross-sector program that combines the knowledge and skills of a management program with marketing, leadership, finance, accounting, communications, economics and information technology. The success of the program and its students contributes to our reputation as a leader in developing the next generation of entrepreneurs and business leaders that influence change, innovate and succeed at companies locally, nationally and internationally.

*"If you don't see women like you, rising through the ranks, it's hard to see yourself there."*

- Keynote, Catherine Philogène, RBC Global Asset Management

### Attendee breakdown - 263 in total



- (35.74%) - Employer
- (4.56%) - Organizer
- (15.97%) - Sponsor

- (35.74%) - Student
- (7.98%) - Speaker

## MTEI Internships

Each year, students in the Master of Technology Entrepreneurship and Innovation (MTEI) program look forward to connecting with companies to secure internships. This year's corporate tours took a virtual but local approach. With 28 students participating in the program, they were linked with Halifax companies, Barrington Consulting Group, IGNITE and Volta.

Students utilized design thinking skills and worked with these employers to solve problem statements. "The SMU MTEI Design Thinking Program has been an amazing opportunity for IGNITE to present students with real fundamental problems that exist in local industries for everyone to work together towards creating impactful solutions. This program touches on

the absolute definition of innovation of bringing ideas to impact.

At the core of the program are talented students, working with experienced mentors, creating solutions to tangible problems being faced in the region today. At IGNITE, we were more than happy to work with the program and look forward to continuously supporting the program and the graduates in the future;" says Sebastian Green, Regional Director, IGNITE.

The program administration works with students to build a sense of self, identify their passions, and find where that intersects with employer's purpose, leading to a successful internship/ mentoring experience.



The Saint Mary's University Entrepreneurship Centre (SMUEC) has been recognized for its role in the start-up ecosystem. Volta's Catalyst Award credits SMUEC for creating cohesion and growth in the ecosystem. The ecosystem brings together a diverse group of entrepreneurs

## SMUEC receives Volta's Catalyst Award

and companies representing hundreds of start-ups in Atlantic Canada.

Michael Sanderson, Director, SMUEC and his team are proud of their work and of the recognition. "To be recognized as an organization that has created cohesion and growth in the start-up ecosystem is an honour. We are proud to contribute to Nova Scotia redefining itself as a place for entrepreneurial opportunity and success;" said Sanderson.

The efforts behind the award include Sanderson, his team at the SMUEC and their community partners who offered



free advice to businesses during the pandemic. The initiatives that engaged and supported the community include SMUEC's free business coaching and consulting services in a wide range of areas to companies in Atlantic Canada, this began during lockdown in March 2020. As well, SMUEC, with ACOA's support and in partnership with the David Sobey Centre for Retail Excellence, created the RISE Again Retail support program. This program trained participants on how to navigate to an online retail environment as a

response to COVID-19. SMUEC has worked with over 300 businesses this year to help identify strategies to pivot to a virtual environment. Through its Work placements/Wage Subsidies program SMUEC distributed thirty-four wage subsidies to local businesses allowing them to hire students and individuals with disabilities during Covid-19.

E  
M  
B  
A



The Sobey School of Business' EMBA class was the only program to work on campus during the pandemic. Due to travel restrictions, not all students were able to be in Halifax, to address this, an experimental model for HyFlex (a blended approach of in-person and remote learning) was developed. "Our EMBA Class of 2021 took on the challenge of creating a HyFlex learning environment with curiosity, patience and determination," explained Wendy Carroll, Director of EMBA Program, "Every third week we were on campus and worked to engage classroom and remote participants in a variety of active learning activities. The professionalism and innovativeness of our students, staff and faculty was amazing."

Developing a variety of methods for effective active learning has its challenges, an essential part of its success was engaging students in the process of creating this new environment.

# RESEARCH & KNOWLEDGE

## Employment a key factor in immigration retention



Between 2016 and 2018, more than  
**28,000**  
people immigrated to Canada with an  
intention to either go to or live in  
**NOVA SCOTIA**

Dr. Ather Akbari has taken a close look at immigration in Nova Scotia, examining why people come to Nova Scotia, what encourages them to stay and why some leave. Between 2016 and 2018, more than 28,000 people immigrated to Canada with an intention to either go to or live in Nova Scotia. At the time of the research, approximately 74% remained living in the prov-

ince. Dr. Akbari's key findings showed that people that stayed in Nova Scotia cited quality of life, community safety and accommodation affordability as top reasons. For those that left, economic opportunities were the driving force. This research emphasizes the need to have employers involved in the immigration process, when people arrive with job prospects, it helps

to increase the immigration retention rate. It also recommends that Nova Scotia should look to attract immigrants who bring families with them. Securing employment, having a connection to family and to community such as volunteering, sport and recreation are factors that can have a positive impact on family satisfaction living in the province.

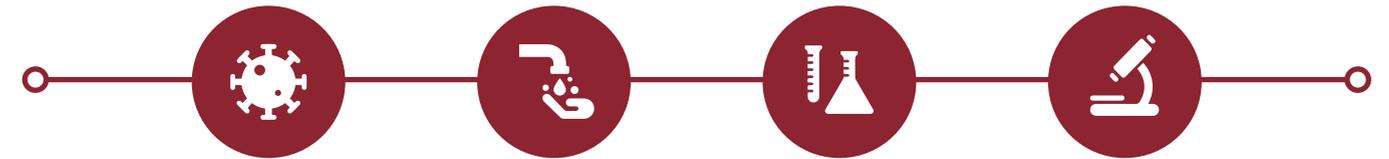


## Researcher pivots to study impacts of COVID-19



Economics Professor, Dr. Yigit Aydede, had no trouble pivoting his research related to chronic respiratory illness to focus on the impact of COVID-19 in Nova Scotia. As Principal Investigator, Dr. Aydede is leading a group of co-investigators (Dr. Mutlu Yuksel of Dalhousie University and Dr. Daniel Silver of Acadia University) to study "The Role of Environmental Determinants and Social Mobility in Viral Infection Transmission in Halifax". Funded by the Nova Scotia COVID-19 Health Research Coalition, they examine high-dimensional air quality and atmospheric data localized to a street-by-street basis, alongside satellite weather data, looking at their impacts on respiratory health.

Large amounts of data will be examined to find relationships using machine learning and neural network techniques. Evidence examined will include high-dimensional air quality, atmospheric data, satellite weather data, looking for the impacts on respiratory health. Additionally, data from 811 and COVID testing data from the provincial government will be looked at. This research will help determine the possible effects of mobility restrictions.



## Federal research grant helps build the business case for corporate social responsibility

Competition in the business world is tough. Consumers have many choices and access to endless information making the decision-making process even more competitive. Research shows that more and more, consumers want to feel good about where they are spending money and make purchase decisions based on the ethical practices of corporations.

Funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), Dr. Tiffany Vu's latest research project wants to prove that businesses can do well by doing good through her project "Transitioning to Good: When is Striving to be an Ethical Business as Good as Being One?" As a lead researcher in the field of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Vu aims to prove that organizations who adopt strong CSR practices early on, achieve positive reputational and economic returns.



“I am looking forward to more people having the opportunity that Kendra and I did through the Viola Desmond bursary, an opportunity for them to pursue what they love.”  
Leah Matheson, award recipient.



**PRME** Principles for Responsible Management Education  
an initiative by the United Nations Global Compact



## Responsible investing: Finance for the future

The Sobey School of Business, as part of its commitment to PRME (Principals for Responsible Management Education) hosted *Responsible Investing: Finance for the Future*. The event brought together members of the business community, faculty, staff and students to hear from experts discussing the intersection of global social responsibility and finance, within the framework of the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). PRME’s vision is to realize the goals through responsible management education and it provides a framework in which learning communities are developed and awareness of the SDGs is top of mind. The SSB, as part of its strategic goal to advance, aims to enable greater student engagement through transformative learning experiences that incorporate social responsibility.

The event kicked-off with a research expo that gave Sobey School faculty and students the opportunity to share findings and discuss current work and its applications of social responsibility, sustainability and other SDGs through poster presentations. It helped raise awareness of the abundance of good work happening at Saint Mary’s University and provided opportunities for discussions around future work.

The event’s keynote speaker was Ian Robertson, CFA, Portfolio Manager, Director, and Vice President of Odium Brown who delivered an insightful presentation, *What’s driving the global momentum? Responsible investing for investment professionals and academics*. This was followed by a panel discussion, *Responsible Investing: from multiple perspectives*. Each speaker left attendees with a better understanding of responsible investing and its implications on investment professionals, academics and the business community.

The event brought together many great minds and aligned with SSB’s strategic goals of connect, discover and advance.



## First Viola Desmond Bursary recipients awarded

On November 8, Saint Mary’s University honoured the legacy of Viola Desmond through the inaugural awarding of a bursary in her name. Together with the Delmore Buddy Daye Learning Institute, future female African-Nova Scotia business leaders were celebrated. The date was specifically chosen to coincide with the same date in 1946, when Desmond refused to leave a whites-only area of a theatre in New Glasgow, helping start the civil rights movement in Canada.

The awards were presented to the first recipients, commerce student, Leah Matheson, and accounting student, Kendra Smith.

The annual award was established with the permission of the Desmond Family and through the generosity of The Honourable Wilfred P. Moore QC BComm’64 LLD’07, and Ms. Jane Adams Ritcey.

# NEWS WORTH CELEBRATING

## Sobey School of Business earns top marks for research from Maclean's Magazine

Saint Mary's University has achieved 4th place in Canada as the top undergraduate university by **Maclean's Magazine**. The national magazine puts out its rankings annually, with Saint Mary's and the Sobey School of Business continuing to climb the ranks over the past decade. This year, the Sobey School of Business ranked 14th of Canada's top business schools and earned the reputation of the top business research school in Atlantic Canada.



## MBA program is #10 on global Corporate Knights Better World ranking



Sobey School of Business earned a top 10 spot in the world for its MBA program in the Corporate Knights Top 40 Better World MBA ranking. Corporate Knights is the world's largest business magazine focused on sustainability and responsible business. Its annual ranking of the top 40 MBA schools in the world assesses universities based on the number of institutes and centres dedicated to sustainable development, the percentage of core courses that integrate sustainable development, faculty research publications and citations on sustainable development themes and faculty



gender and racial diversity. "We are proud of our faculty's strengths in international research and ethics and the growing expertise in social enterprise development at Saint Mary's which have helped us achieve this recognition," said Dean Harjeet Bhabra. The Sobey School of Business' MBA program emphasizes responsible leadership, and this global acknowledgement highlights our commitment.

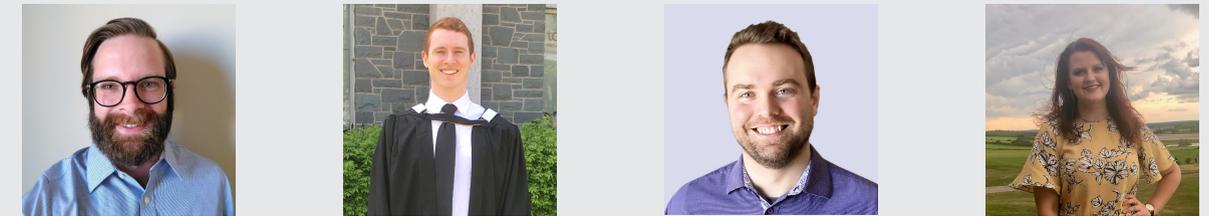
## Elevating impact through the Sobey National Innovator and Sobey MBA Scholarships

As part of our mission to elevate our impact, the Sobey School of Business has made a commitment to attract top business students to its programs. This has been made possible thanks to a historic gift of \$18 million from the Sobey Family, Sobey Foundation and Sobeys Inc. in 2019. Through this generous gift, the new Sobey National Innovators and Sobey MBA Scholarships were created and presented to students from across Canada to support them in their studies. This year, for the first time, ten undergraduate Sobey National Innovators Scholarships valued at \$50,000 were awarded to:



**Left to Right:** Paige Bigelow (Northeast Kings Education Centre, NS), Hannah Birru (Halifax West High School, NS), Jonah Crowther (Halifax Grammar School, NS), Susan MacInnis (Prince Andrew High School, NS), Aaron Currie (Charlottetown Rural High School, PE), Marley Raycroft (Lockview High School, NS), Connor Haines (Park View Education Centre, NS), Ethan Stafford (Kennebecasis Valley High School, NB), Max Legere (Saint John High School, NB), Hallie Wedge (Notre Dame Catholic Secondary School, ON)

## The inaugural Sobey MBA Scholarships, valued at \$30,000, were presented to:



Alexander Bourque (NS), Nicolas James Graham (NS), Brandon Legacy (NB), Bailey Hanna Sutherland (NS)

We look forward to seeing the impact they make while completing their studies at Saint Mary's University.

## Dr. Cathy Driscoll awarded SSHRC Insight Grant



Saint Mary's University researchers have received federal funding for projects totaling \$300,000 from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council's Insight Grants competition. Of the three recipients, Dr. Cathy Driscoll from the Sobey School of Business received funding for her research project, "Exploring Collective Moral Disengagement in Cover-up of Sexual Abuse in the Roman Catholic Church (RCC)". Her research aims to better understand, and effect change in organizations that are engaged in potentially contradictory practices to their principles, mission and values.

## BNUZ-SMU joint Bachelor of Commerce Program graduates 72 students



As part of its long-standing partnership with Beijing Normal University, Zhuhai (BNUZ), 72 students graduated from the joint Bachelor of Commerce Program in absentia from Saint Mary's University. Taught entirely in China, students in this program receive a truly international education, with half of their courses delivered by visiting SMU faculty and the other half taught by faculty members of BNUZ.

Relationships developed through this process have led to further research initiatives with colleagues in the International Business Faculty at BNUZ. This truly demonstrates how the Sobey School of Business is elevating impact by connecting through global learning.

## RC3.1 FACE SHIELD



## MTEI alum creates 3D printed face shields

As someone who has been teaching 3D printing and innovation for 26 years, **Kevin Gallant MTEI'16** wasn't surprised when requests started coming in to help create PPE required to address the pandemic. Equipped with two 3D printers and utilizing rope skills he developed lobster fishing, he immediately shifted gears to design a face shield prototype in his home basement lab. In partnership with PRUSA, they quickly perfected a design now known as the RC3.1 face shield.

Through his leadership, Kevin now works with a supply chain to maintain over 25 3D printers in a network creating the PPE pieces. Always the inventor, he is now working on a no-touch doorknob for long-term care facilities where people can use their arm and elbow to open and pull doors. This will help with contamination prevention in traditionally high-touch zones.

## EMBA first in Canada to achieve Silver Accreditation by CEBMa



"a series of courses that connect, build, and integrate evidence-based management principles."

Elevating impact is about having a strong commitment to continuous improvement. This year, the Sobey Executive Master of Business Administration (EMBA) program was awarded silver accreditation by the International Centre for Evidence-Based Management (CEBMa), becoming the first to receive this level of accreditation in Canada. CEBMa is the leading authority on evidence-based practice in the field of management

and leadership. It is an independent, non-profit foundation that provides support and education to managers, leaders, consultants, teachers and others who want to enhance their understanding of how an evidence-based approach helps people in organizations make better decisions. The Sobey EMBA program emphasizes evidence-based management,

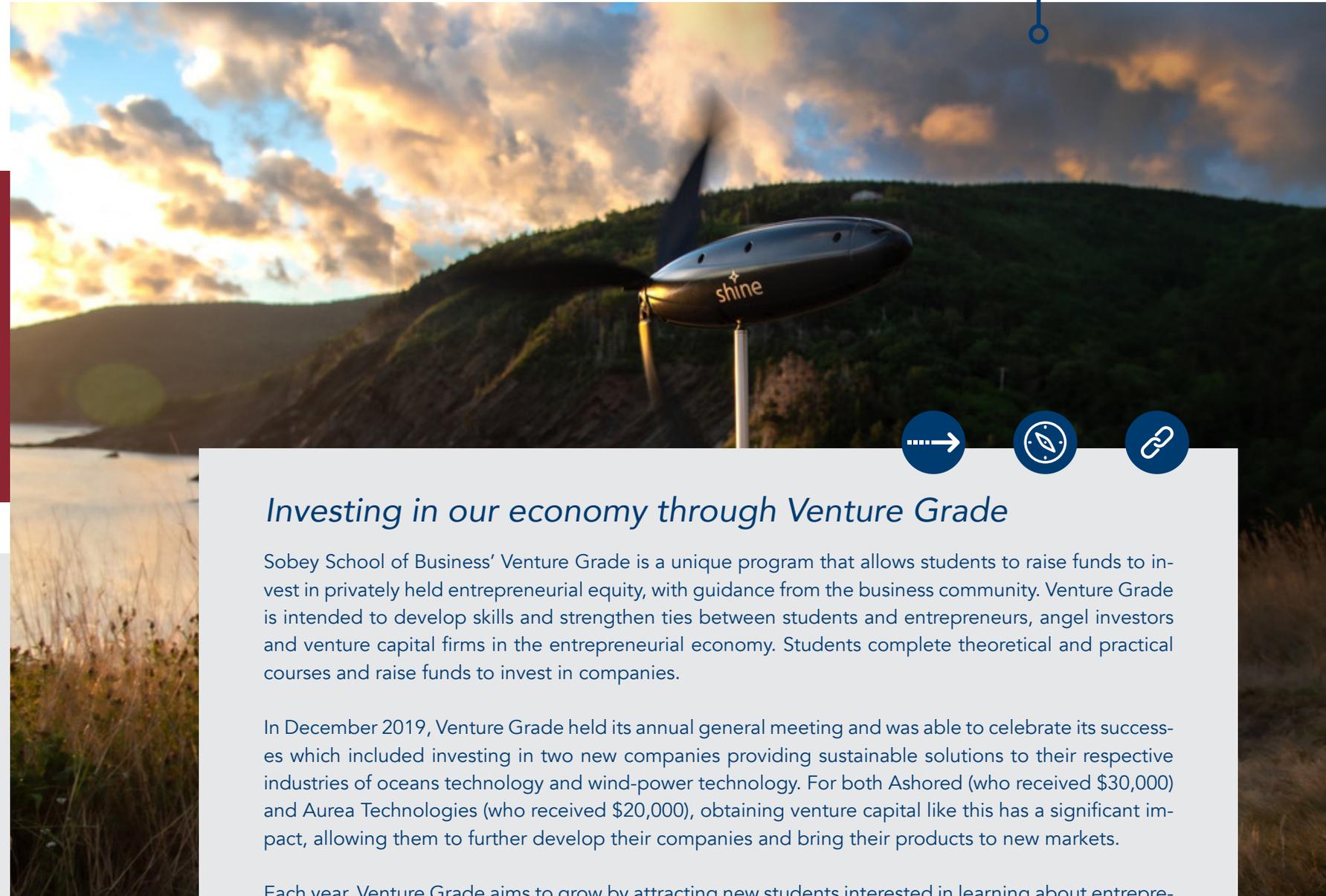
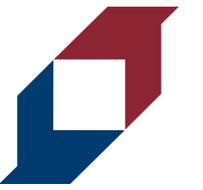
a framework which originated in medicine and now has applications in business and management. The accreditation recognizes that the program has "a series of courses that connect, build and integrate evidence-based management principles." This achievement builds on the Sobey School of Business' reputation as a leader in business education and responsible management.

\$20,000

Received by Aurea Technologies

\$30,000

Received by Ashored



### Investing in our economy through Venture Grade

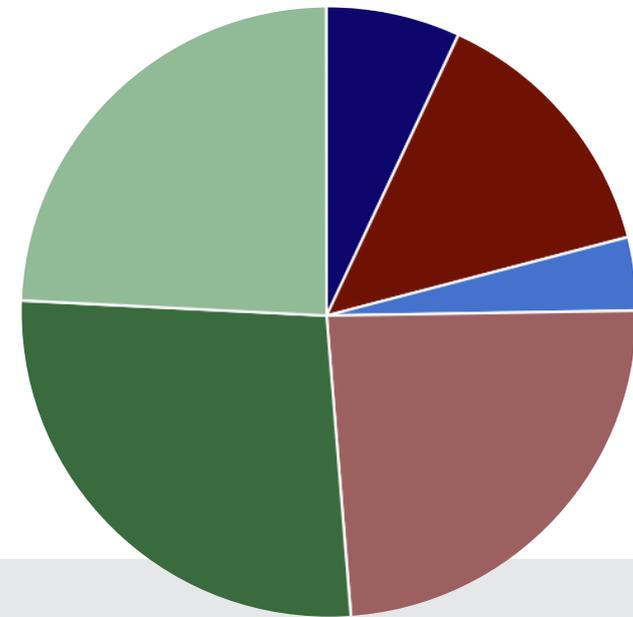
Sobey School of Business' Venture Grade is a unique program that allows students to raise funds to invest in privately held entrepreneurial equity, with guidance from the business community. Venture Grade is intended to develop skills and strengthen ties between students and entrepreneurs, angel investors and venture capital firms in the entrepreneurial economy. Students complete theoretical and practical courses and raise funds to invest in companies.

In December 2019, Venture Grade held its annual general meeting and was able to celebrate its successes which included investing in two new companies providing sustainable solutions to their respective industries of oceans technology and wind-power technology. For both Ashored (who received \$30,000) and Aurea Technologies (who received \$20,000), obtaining venture capital like this has a significant impact, allowing them to further develop their companies and bring their products to new markets.

Each year, Venture Grade aims to grow by attracting new students interested in learning about entrepreneurship and its financing. For more information, visit [venturegrade.ca](http://venturegrade.ca).

# SOBEY SCHOOL BY THE NUMBERS 2019 - 2020

Total number of students enrolled in Sobey School programs	2,545
Percent of international students at the Sobey School	43.4%
Number of originating countries	80
Percentage of Faculty with PhDs	97%
Number of students graduating from Sobey programs	Graduate 284 & Undergraduate 2088
Number of Alumni	22,863

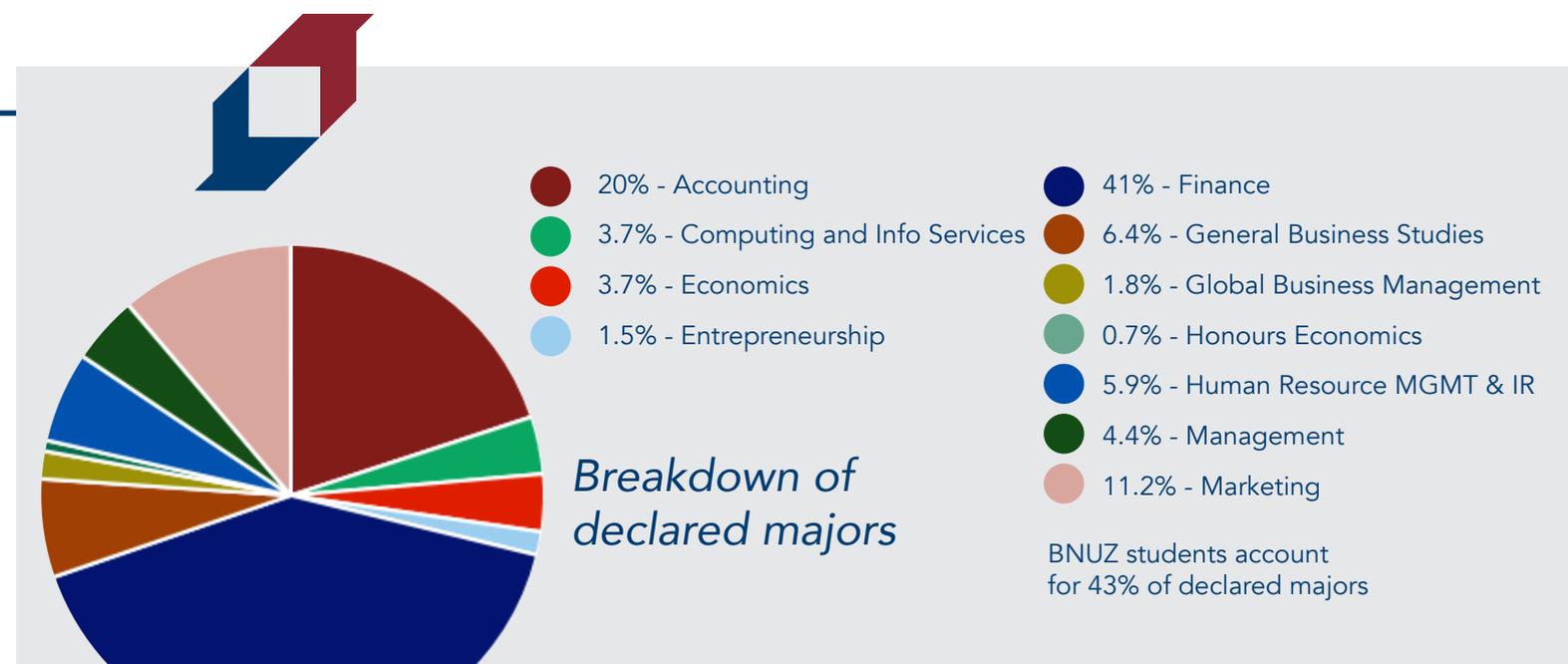


## Graduate Program

- 6.9% - Executive Master of Business Administration
- 13.9% - Master of Management Cooperatives
- 3.9% - Master of Applied Economics
- 24% - Master of Business Administration
- 27% - Master of Finance
- 24.3% - Master of Technology Entrepreneurship Innovation

## Top countries of origin for international students

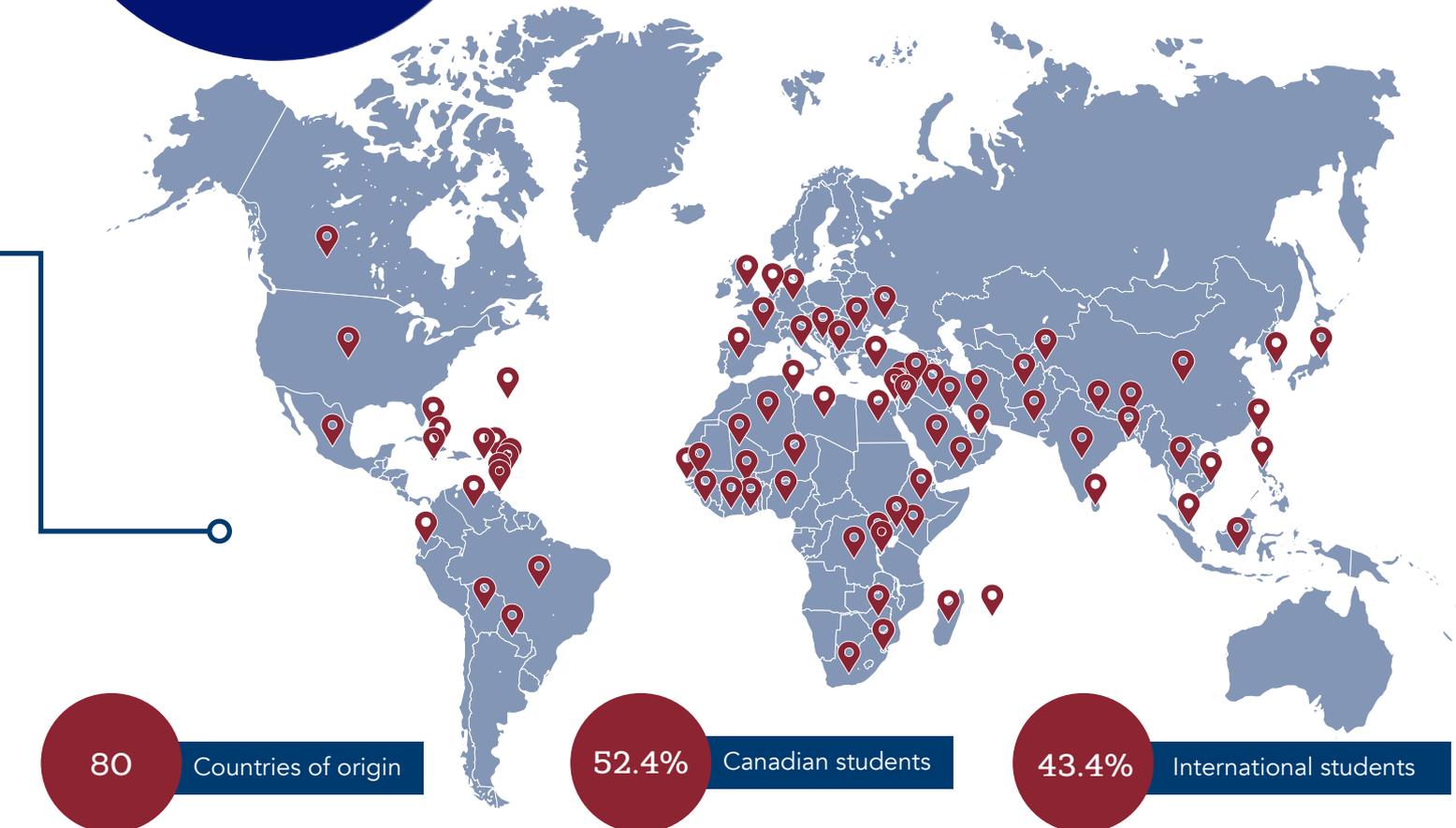
1. Peoples Republic of China
2. India
3. Bangladesh
4. Bahamas
5. Vietnam
6. Antigua & Barbuda
7. United States of America
8. Nigeria
9. Uganda
10. Turkey & Egypt



- 20% - Accounting
- 3.7% - Computing and Info Services
- 3.7% - Economics
- 1.5% - Entrepreneurship
- 41% - Finance
- 6.4% - General Business Studies
- 1.8% - Global Business Management
- 0.7% - Honours Economics
- 5.9% - Human Resource MGMT & IR
- 4.4% - Management
- 11.2% - Marketing

## Breakdown of declared majors

BNUZ students account for 43% of declared majors



- 80 Countries of origin
- 52.4% Canadian students
- 43.4% International students



## ADDRESS:

903 Robie Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3H 3C3

## SOCIALS:

 [Sobey School of Business at Saint Mary's University](#)

 [@SobeySchool\\_SMU](#)

 [SMU Webmaster](#)

 **SOBEY**  
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

 **SAINT MARY'S**  
UNIVERSITY