Leadership Excellence

Washington University was founded by forward-thinking St. Louis business and civic leaders who believed the university could be a hub for education, research and innovation that would grow and prosper with the St. Louis community. I know they would be proud of the world-class university that grew from such a humble beginning.

Washington University's progress has always depended on significant philanthropic support at critical times in our history. During today's challenging economic environment, we are grateful for the Knights' and the Bauers' contributions to a new stage of development for Olin, which will bring great benefit to our campus and the entire business community.

Each generation of university leaders has been able to build on the success of its predecessors and to raise the bar higher for the next. The university is the sum of its people and their accomplishments. Professors, students, alumni, friends and benefactors are all a part of the proud tradition of Washington University. The talented people in our community today are building an impressive foundation for our future success in St. Louis, the country and the world.

Mark S. Wrighton
Chancellor

A Message from the Chancellor

Olin Business School Alumni & Development
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e-mail Building@Olin.wustl.edu
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As Olin Business School approaches its centennial, our plans call for continued growth in the number of our professors, students and, of course, alumni who form our lifeline to the ever-changing and complex world of business.

While growth and expansion are positive trends, we must not compromise our high academic standards nor the close interaction of faculty, students and alumni that make the Olin experience unique. To maintain our world-class programs that attract the best and brightest scholars, we need more facilities to accommodate our current and future programs.

Thanks to the foresight and generosity of Chuck and Joanne Knight and George and Carol Bauer, we have a strong foundation on which to begin Olin’s next phase of growth into our second century. I hope you will join us as we build upon our legacy and continue to transform today’s students into tomorrow’s business leaders.

Mahendra Gupta
Dean
Geraldine J. & Robert L. Virgil Professor of Accounting & Management
Joanne and Charles F. Knight

Joanne and Charles F. Knight’s generosity to countless organizations has strengthened the region in the fields of cancer research, health care and education.

“Chuck,” leader of Emerson for three decades, has been devoted to Olin Business School since 1980, when he chaired the Business Task Force that helped launch the school on its current trajectory. In 1987, he was instrumental in its naming by the John M. Olin Foundation.

In 1995, Knight became the inaugural chair of Olin’s National Council and paved the way for The Charles F. Knight Executive Education & Conference Center, dedicated in 2001. In 1999, he received the university’s Robert S. Brookings Award, and, in 2012, the Knights received the Olin Dean’s Medal.

In late 2011, they stepped forward with a transformative gift of $15 million to expand facilities with Knight Hall. Their visionary gift provides the foundation for Olin’s second century of top-ranked undergraduate and graduate business programs.

Carol and George Bauer

Carol and George Bauer have helped organizations from their home community in Connecticut to St. Louis and around the world.

Their impact on Olin Business School and Washington University has been tremendous. In 2007, they established the George and Carol Bauer Professorship in Organizational Ethics and Governance. George Bauer serves on the university’s New York Regional Cabinet, the Board of Trustees and Olin Business School’s National Council.

Carol and George Bauer received the Robert S. Brookings Award in 2011 in recognition of their extraordinary generosity and commitment to the university, and they were awarded the Olin Dean’s Medal this year.

In late 2011, the Bauer Foundation stepped forward with a transformative gift of $10 million to expand facilities with Bauer Hall. The expansion will provide the foundation for Olin’s second century of top-ranked undergraduate and graduate business programs.
LAYER THE FINANCIAL FOUNDATION FOR OLIN’S EXPANSION

Lead gifts totaling $25 million from two of Washington University’s most dedicated benefactors – $15 million from Charles F. and Joanne Knight, and $10 million from George and Carol Bauer through the Bauer Foundation – will provide the capital foundation for Olin’s second century of top-ranked business education.

The $90-million project includes two innovative buildings, Knight Hall and Bauer Hall, totaling 166,000 square feet. The expansion will greatly expand Olin’s footprint on the Danforth campus, where it is currently housed in Simon Hall and The Charles F. Knight Executive Education & Conference Center.

“With these transformative gifts, the Knights and the Bauers are making an investment in Olin’s future and, more importantly, in the futures of innumerable students, teachers, researchers and business leaders who will be armed with the knowledge to affect positive change in the world.”

– MAHENDRA R. GUPTA, DEAN

“Our gratitude to these wonderful friends for their critical lead support cannot be overstated, for not only are they helping us realize Olin’s future plans, but they also will surely serve to inspire others to participate in its growth.”

– MARK S. WRIGHTON, CHANCELLOR
A Message from the Dean

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Civic-minded leaders and businessmen in the mid-19th century founded Washington University on principles we still value and aspire to today. William Greenleaf Eliot, Wayman Crow, William F. Gephart, Robert S. Brookings and other founding fathers were determined to inspire students to be dedicated civic and business leaders who would transform St. Louis and the world.

In 2023, Robert S. Brookings laid the cornerstone of Duncker Hall, the business school's first permanent home. In 1925, the school was renamed the School of Business and Public Administration.

The first dean of the School of Commerce and Finance – as it was known in 1917 – was William F. Gephart, a professor of economics. Determined to establish a business school at Washington University, Gephart personally solicited donations from 30 St. Louis businesses to found the school. Three years later, nine young men and one woman posed on the steps of Brookings Hall as the proud first graduating class. That pioneering woman, the late Margaret Haase Calhoun, recalled her student days in 1985. “It was a streetcar college. Some faculty and out-of-town students lived in McMillan Hall where there were also sorority rooms … and Duncker Hall was about to be built.”

Bob Virgil's tenure as dean from 1977 to 1993 marked a period of vibrant growth. A strategic plan developed by a task force under the leadership of Chuck Knight in 1980–81 called for a program of excellence in teaching and research that would elevate the school to national prominence. The task force report called for a new facility as essential to success and led to the construction of John E. Simon Hall, dedicated in April 1986 and named for its lead donor, Mr. Simon.

The business school began to flourish in the late 1940s and 1950s. The MBA program was established in 1950. Then in 1958, Dean Trump along with a group of faculty added the Graduate School of Business Administration. Enrollment continued to grow, forcing a move from Duncker Hall in 1961 to Prince Hall, formerly known as Liggett Hall and built as a dormitory in 1902.
For 95 years, the business school at Washington University has been a champion of transformational business education. But our rich heritage isn’t defined by the land on which the university sits. Nor is it contained within our venerable buildings.

Our legacy of excellence is built on a storied lineage of students, faculty and people like you – the very foundation of the Washington University community.

Their dedication – your dedication – is more than just support for a historic institution. In a very real sense it is the institution.

Under Dean Stuart Greenbaum’s leadership, The Charles F. Knight Executive Education & Conference Center was built and dedicated in 2001. It allowed Olin to expand executive education offerings and provide space for the St. Louis business community to interact with faculty and students in areas from research and mentoring to career development and new ventures. In its first decade, the Knight Center served over 124,000 guests, more than 14,000 events and nearly 3,000 Executive MBA students.

In 2002, Olin’s Executive MBA – Shanghai program was launched as a joint program offered by Washington University and Fudan University. It has been ranked consistently among the top five international MBA programs since its inception. Closer to home, Olin established an Executive MBA program in Kansas City in 2010.

Olin Business School has achieved international recognition, top rankings in Businessweek and U.S. News surveys and attracted world-class faculty who are recognized leaders in research and teaching. To maintain this standard of excellence and the forward momentum set in motion 95 years ago, Olin must continue to strive to be the best for its students, alumni, faculty, friends and corporate partners. Continued success requires investment in our facilities, room for growth, state-of-the-art technology and a vibrant environment that fosters the creation and exchange of new ideas.

“With this kind of growth, an expansion of our facilities is a clear priority. Our growth has far exceeded the planned capacity of our existing buildings, Simon Hall and The Charles F. Knight Executive Education & Conference Center.”

– DEAN MAHENDRA GUPTA

In 1987, the John M. Olin Foundation presented the school with a $15 million challenge grant for endowment to be matched by private donors. In recognition, the school was renamed for John M. Olin, an industrialist and university trustee. Dean Virgil initiated the executive master of business administration degree program and expanded the experiential learning programs that remain hallmarks of the school today.
AN INNOVATIVE VISION FOR THE OLIN COMMUNITY

The Olin Experience is all about our people, and it happens within the walls of our buildings. The expansion of our Danforth Campus footprint – with the construction of the new Knight Hall and Bauer Hall – will accommodate the growth of our faculty, student body and world-class applied learning opportunities, all while maintaining the close-knit community unique to the Olin Experience.

Our new buildings will contain:

- 2,800 sq. ft. Active Learning Lab
- 300-seat auditorium
- Atrium with café seating for 120 people
- 75 faculty offices
- 18 group study rooms
- 11 classrooms
- Forum
- Graduate Programs’ office
- Weston Career Center
- Dean’s Office

View detailed floor plans of the new buildings at BuildOlin.wustl.edu.
CAMPUS-LEVEL ATRIUM
The three-story glass Atrium is a space within Knight Hall that serves as the social center of the school and connects to Bauer Hall. Adjacent to the Knight Center’s open-air courtyard, the Atrium will contain a large dining area, ample seating and gathering spaces, group study rooms, and access to the South Plaza, campus and all levels of the new building ensemble.

FORUM WITH VIEW LOOKING UP TO ATRIUM
A large, built-in seating area rises from the first floor to the second in the style of an amphitheater to create the Forum. From small informal groups to large public lectures, this meeting space is multifunctional. Bathed in natural light from the Atrium overhead, the first level will also house a 300-seat auditorium and several classrooms.
**KNIGHT HALL**

Knight Hall will connect to the Knight Center and extend east towards McMillan Hall. A two-story glass portal, facing Throop Drive, provides a welcoming entry with a strong visual connection through the new buildings’ Atrium toward Simon Hall. The Tower will house unique meeting rooms and lounges for faculty and doctoral students who will have offices on the fourth and fifth floors.

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**CAFÉ**

From a cup of coffee on the way to class to a complete meal or healthy snack, the 120-seat café will be a welcome and popular destination at the center of the new ensemble of buildings. The café is centrally located on the campus level of the Atrium.
BAUER HALL
Bauer Hall forms the east and south wings of the new building ensemble. The Collegiate Gothic exterior with its arched entrance facing Mudd Field complements its neighbors on the Danforth Campus. The South Plaza, a landscaped terrace, leads to the dramatic glass Atrium. At night, the towers and Atrium will serve as glowing beacons and create new signature landmarks for Olin.

TERRACE CLASSROOM
This tech-savvy, versatile space can be configured into small group study areas, a lecture hall or conference room. Equipped with the latest in audio visual resources for event capture, video conferencing and wireless internet, this room is designed for innovative teaching and events. Doors open to the terrace of the landscaped Mews that borders the east side of Bauer Hall.
You are Olin
YOU ARE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

The reputation and legacy of great universities like Washington University stem directly from its alumni and friends who believe in the importance of higher education and a commitment to excellence. Join us as we continue to create knowledge, inspire individuals, transform business and build for a greater tomorrow.
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