

The University of Vermont Grossman School of Business

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12th Annual



**SCHLESINGER GLOBAL
FAMILY ENTERPRISE
CASE COMPETITION**

Judges Profile Book



A photograph of a university campus. In the foreground, there are several large, mature trees with thick trunks. The ground is covered in grass and fallen autumn leaves. In the middle ground, a large brick building with multiple windows and arched doorways is visible. To the left, a black statue of a woman in a long dress stands on a grassy area. A black lamppost is also visible near the statue. The sky is clear and blue.

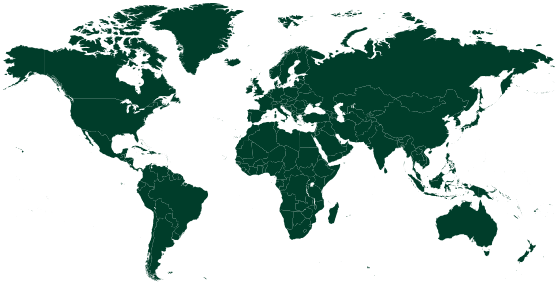
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Judge Orientation Leaders

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Mira Bloemen-Bekx

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Dr. Mira Bloemen-Bekx is Professor of Regional Innovative Capacity at the Hanze UAS, Groningen, Netherlands. Mira's dissertation on next generations' engagement and commitment from Hasselt University, Belgium, received the prestigious 'Best Doctoral Dissertation Award' of the Family Firm Institute, USA, in 2020. Mira has enjoyed a distinguished career as an entrepreneur and strategic marketing consultant for SMEs and family businesses and as a lecturer, head of department and dean in higher education. Her academic interests focus on value-driven approach to leading family enterprises, and she focuses on developing ownership competences, impact-driven innovation and ecosystems. Mira serves as the chair of Case Selection Committee and the Judge Orientation Leader of the SG-FECC.



Evelyn Micelotta

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United States

Dr. Evelyn R. Micelotta is an academic and expert in the field of family business. She currently holds the prestigious Steven Grossman Endowed Chair in Family Business at the University of Vermont's Grossman School of Business. Dr. Micelotta earned her PhD in Strategic Management and Organization from the University of Alberta, Canada, and a PhD in Management Engineering from Milan Polytechnic, Italy. Her research delves into the unique challenges and opportunities that family businesses face within their broader institutional environments. Dr. Micelotta's work has been widely published in leading management journals. Dr. Micelotta is an FFI Fellow, the Co-Editor in Chief of Family Business Review and Senior Editor of Organization Studies.

Competition Judges

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18	Luis Arturo Jimenez-Castillo	32	Chuck Tauck
18	Arran Joyce	33	Jim Tessmer
19	Michael Keller	33	Júlia Tobak
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20	Basma Khoja	34	Jeffery Wacksman
20	Steve Legler	35	Randy Waesche
21	Eli Lesser-Goldsmith	35	Robyn Worrall



Steve Beauchesne

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Canada

Steve Beauchesne joined Family Enterprise Canada and Family Enterprise Foundation as its CEO in 2024. He was the co-founder and CEO of Beau's Brewery, from 2006 to 2022. As CEO, Steve raised more than \$2 million for charity, community, and the independent arts, certified Beau's as Canada's first-ever B-Corp brewery, helped found the first craft brewery in Rwanda, and was a founding member of the Canadian Craft Brewers Association. Steve has been awarded the social entrepreneurship award by the Best of Ottawa Awards, named Design Thinker of the year by the Association of Registered Designers and Community Builder of the year by the United Way. In addition to his full-time gig, Steve sits on the board of directors for the Centre for Social Enterprise Development, plays in a punk rock band and has three daughters.



Debbie Bing

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CFAR
United States

Debbie Bing, President and Principal, began at CFAR as a Project Consultant in 1998, became an Associate in 1999, and a Principal in 2006. Her assumption of the Presidency in 2016 represents the shift to CFAR's Second Generation of Leaders. Debbie helps business leaders and executive teams in family businesses, entrepreneurial organizations, universities, and foundations to build collaborative approaches to their most pressing business challenges. She helps clients manage the multiple pressures of mission, performance, culture, competencies and competition. Debbie is the current Board Chair of the Family Firm Institute (FFI), an FFI Fellow, and a holder of the GEN and Advanced Certificates in Family Business Advising. Debbie holds a Bachelor of Arts from Haverford College and a Master's of International Law and Diplomacy from the Fletcher School at Tufts University



Laura Bonnet

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Center for Family Business at Case Western
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Laura Bonnet is the founding director for the Center for Family Business at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio. The Center was launched in the Fall 2023 to empower family businesses in Northeast Ohio to achieve generational success as well as to conduct new family business research and offer student curriculum. Prior to leading the Center, Laura worked eighteen years at American Greetings including Vice President of Strategic Planning & Initiatives and Director of Strategic Planning, working closely with the Weiss family across multiple generations. Prior to American Greetings, Laura was a consultant for six years with McKinsey & Company. Former work experience includes General Motors, Pepsico and The Disney Company. Laura has her MBA from Stanford University and a B.S. in Business Administration from the University of Nebraska.



John Burton

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John is currently the President of Stormseye Associates, a Vermont based consulting firm working with business leaders and communities around issues related to economic development. He is the Director of Research at the Vermont Futures Project where he develops economic data and policies to improve state-wide economic performance. John also consults with the Distributed Ledger Governance Association around distributed ledger pilots, project planning and legislation. He is the Chair of the South Burlington Economic Development Committee and serves on several business association boards. John was the former Founder and President of NPI Technology Management in South Burlington Vermont where for over 30 years he consulted with business executives around technology budget and planning.



Rino Caruccio

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Retired Finance Vice President at Amazon
United States

Enerino “Rino” Caruccio is a retired Finance Vice President at Amazon, most recently in Amazon Devices & Services, responsible for developing, implementing and delivering insightful analysis that scales with the growth of Device & Services portfolio. Rino joined Amazon in March 2006 as Vice President Corporate FP&A and in 2009 became Vice President Worldwide Seller Services Finance. In 2013 he became Vice President Worldwide Consumer Analytics before moving to his current Amazon role in 2017. Prior to joining Amazon, Rino worked 22 years for General Electric in various finance leadership roles. Rino holds an MBA from Stanford University and a Bachelor of Science from UVM School of Business.



Michael Casella

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Casella Waste
United States

Mr. Casella brings broad experience in both the private and public sectors, particularly in the field of Waste and Recycling. Mr. Casella has been a member of numerous industry-related and community service-related state and local boards and commissions, including the Green Up Vermont, Vermont Chamber of Commerce, National Waste & Recycling Association’s Future Industry leader association, Wheels for Warmth. Mr. Casella is also a recipient of the waste 360 – 40 under 40 award for his work in the industry. The waste360 “40 under 40” awards program recognizes inspiring and innovative professionals under the age of 40 whose work in waste, recycling and organics has made a significant contribution to the industry. Mr. Casella holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from West Virginia University.



Thomas Clark

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Veritage International
Canada

Thomas Clark, COO of Veritage International, brings more than 13 years of experience working in the family business field. Having begun working in the family office space for Business Families Foundation (BFF) based in Montreal, he found his niche in education and content development. During his 8 years with BFF, Thomas was instrumental in developing an extensive and diverse portfolio of interactive content and educational tools, to support families wishing to pursue an Intrapreneurial initiative. After BFF merged with Family Enterprise Canada (FEC) in 2020, Thomas assumed the role of National Director of Content Development for FEC. During this time, he focused on family business research within Canada, specifically understanding Canadian family business transition intentions and barriers. Thomas is passionate about preparing, integrating and supporting the next generation to flourish in their roles.



Stephanie Clarke

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White + Burke Real Estate Advisors
United States

A member of the White + Burke team since 2006, Stephanie Clarke (She/Her) brings a strategic and collaborative approach lens to her work with public-private partnerships and land use. Beyond her project work, Stephanie collaborates with the company president on business planning and relationship-building for White + Burke's role in the State. Dedicated to her community, she works on initiatives supporting equity, financial literacy, and diversity and inclusion. Stephanie is a incorporator for Northfield Mutual Holding Company, she holds a B.A. from the University of Vermont, and received her M.B.A. from Champlain College. A proud "chosen Vermonter" — someone who chooses to live and work in the State — she enjoys cooking, reading, spending time with her husband, and doing anything to elicit giggles from her two small children.



Matthew Cropp

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Vermont Employee Ownership Center
United States

Matthew Cropp is Executive Director of the Vermont Employee Ownership Center, an organization he has worked for since 2014. He has advised hundreds of business owners on succession planning, and worked with numerous employees seeking to purchase their workplaces. He received his MA in History from UVM in 2011, and lives in the New North End of Burlington with his wife Allison and their young son.



Jim Davis

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James H. Davis is the Vernon Maughan and MaRee C. Buehler Endowed Professor Endowed Professor of Management, Chairman of the Marketing and Strategy Department and director of Executive Education in the Jon M. Huntsman School of Business at Utah State University. Prior to Utah State he was the John F. O'Shaughnessy Professor of Family Enterprises, Siegfried Director of Entrepreneurship and a Professor of Strategic Management in the Mendoza College of Business at the University of Notre Dame. His research focuses upon trust, stewardship theory, strategy, and social capital and has appeared in books and elite journals.



Alexandra Dawson

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Dr. Alexandra Dawson is a Professor of Management and holds the CIBC Distinguished Professorship in Entrepreneurship and Family Business. She has a PhD in Management and Business Administration from Bocconi University, where she was also a post-doctoral fellow, and an MSc Econ from the London School of Economics. Alexandra's research is in entrepreneurship (e.g., women entrepreneurs, founder teams, founder ownership) and family business (e.g., successor commitment, private equity investment, family involvement in governance). She has published in several journals, including Journal of Business Venturing, Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice, Family Business Review and Journal of Family Business Strategy. Prior to academia, Alexandra worked as a strategy consultant in London and Milan for several years, advising businesses and private equity investors.



Davis Farmer

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Davis Farmer is an entrepreneur in the life sciences. He has formed companies in the US, UK, New Zealand and Russia as well as completing numerous transactions in all the major healthcare markets including China, Turkey and Argentina. His current focus is on a New Zealand company that is developing a non-invasive technology for treating brain disorders using ultrasound and writing a book on starting companies based upon academic science. He serves on multiple boards of not-for-profits.



Ian Fenwick

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Sasin School of Management
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Dr. Ian Fenwick is Director of Sasin School of Management, Bangkok. He arrived in Thailand in 1988 from Schulich School of Business, York University, to develop entrepreneurship courses. Ian co-authored *Digimarketing* in 2008 with Kent Wertime, a pioneering book on digital marketing, which was translated into multiple languages. He is also Professor Emeritus at Schulich.



Robert Finn

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Paper and Printing
United States

Recently retired from a fifty year career in the paper and printing industries., Bob spent the last 24 with the Lindenmeyr Central division of CNG, a privately held paper merchant. Representing paper manufacturers, he supplied catalog marketers, publishers and retailers with paper and paperboard. Wherever possible, the paper was made using environmentally responsible processes, recycled fiber, and FSC or SFI certification. As a middleman he built new account relationships, drove sales revenues for producers, and created technical and financial solutions that optimized costs and enhanced profits for buyers. When demand for print advertising started to decline he added paper sales to food packagers, and in consumer product applications including gift wrap and greeting cards. Bob earned an MBA from NYU '80 and a BA from St Lawrence '74. He served as a Director for 7 years on the Shelburne, VT and CSSU School Boards, and 6 years on the Lake Champlain YC Board of Governors. Married for 41 years, Bob and Kathleen have three adult children and one granddaughter.



Walter Frame

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Walter Frame is Chief Operating Officer at Trapp Family Lodge in Stowe Vermont; implementing the business activities for the resort and 2,500 acre estate; hotel, brewery, cross country skiing, mountain biking, recreation, homeowner association management, and real estate sales & development. Prior to Trapp Family Lodge, Mr. Frame was Vice President and Director of Real Estate Development at Spruce Peak Realty, LLC (AIG Global Real Estate), for the period 2003-2011 where he administered all development, governance and operations for the planned resort community Spruce Peak at Stowe. Prior to his ventures in Vermont, Frame was a regional financial controller for Destination Hotels & Resorts, a hospitality & property management company with more than 9,000 employees, over 9,300 hotel rooms and condominium units, and more than \$2.7 billion in assets under management. Walter is a Trustee for Copley Hospital, Stowe Land Trust, and Spruce Peak Arts Center Foundation. Walter is married to Kristina von Trapp and they live in Stowe with their two daughters, Annie and Stella.



George Frantzis

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HR Director at Quassy Amusement Park
United States

I am a member of the owning and operating family at Quassy Amusement & Water Park in Middlebury, Connecticut. I currently serve as the General Manager for the park and the Human Resources Director. I oversee the hiring, training, and cultivation of our entire team of 350 employees. I also am directly in charge of guest relations, capital improvements, general operations, safety, and community relations. When our park is not in operation, I help oversee sales, professional development, and long-term park strategy in a dynamic, fun, and competitive industry!



Marian Fritz

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Marian Fritz is a consultant to small businesses and nonprofits, with an emphasis on teaching organizations how to manage, budget, and plan. She is also a lecturer at the University of Vermont, teaching organizational behavior, personal finance, financial management for community entrepreneurs, and social enterprise. She has produced classes on the basics of business for groups such as the Franklin County Industrial Development Center, Mercy Connections' Women's Small Business Program, and the Central Vermont Economic Development Corporation. Marian earned a master's in business administration with a concentration in finance from the University of Pittsburgh. She has worked for IBM, Chittenden Bank, the Vermont Symphony Orchestra, and was president and CEO of a real estate investment company in Burlington, Vermont. She has served on the boards of the Burlington Discover Jazz Festival, the UVM Lane Series, The Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity, the Humane Society of Chittenden County, among others.



Danna Greenberg

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Danna Greenberg is the Walter H. Carpenter Professor of Organizational Behavior at Babson College where she is also currently serving as Associate Dean of Faculty and Management Division Chair. Her research focuses on how individuals integrate work, family, and community as they move through their careers and how organizations can support individuals to have meaningful, impactful lives in and outside of work.



Lisa Groeneveld

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OnLogic

United States

After a decade in Telecom sales in the US and Europe, Lisa Groeneveld returned to her native Vermont in 2003. She cofounded OnLogic which specializes in industrial computer hardware design and manufacturing. Lisa has guided the company to strategic growth of nearly 25% year over year through her strong international business, sales and technology background. Together with husband and co-founder Roland, she has expanded OnLogic's international efforts to develop in-house engineering and keen industrial design knowledge. Integrating the latest and most requested industrial IoT technologies, OnLogic ensures a seamless fit into complex client solutions. Today the company provides the computing power for some of the world's most well known businesses. As OnLogic's Chair of the Board, Lisa is deeply committed to meeting her clients' business, financial and technical goals.



John Gugliada

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Family Enterprise USA

United States

John Gugliada Director of Strategic Partnerships & Business Development John Gugliada is an experienced Business Development Executive who partners with CEO's of both large and small businesses, to grow their top line. After many years of leading sales teams in a corporate setting, as an EVP and SVP, John truly understands what is required to drive results- and it's never accomplished through cutting corners in the short term. It's accomplished through a well thought out strategy and keeping your daily playbook simple. He has worked with companies in multiple industry segments, spanning five continents. John holds an MBA from the University of Hartford and is a regular contributor to State economic and workforce development committees.



Torri Hawley

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Torri is the Chief Learning Officer at Tamarind Learning. A seventh-gen member of a 150-year-old family business, she sits on her family office and operating companies' boards. With a BBA in Family Enterprise Management and a master's in Strategic HR, she brings a decade of experience in wealth education. Certified in family business and wealth advising, she previously worked in Ultra-High-Net-Worth Wealth Management and a multi-gen family office. A recognized speaker, she was named one of Family Business Magazine's "25 Under 35." Torri focuses on local childhood hunger initiatives and lives in Philadelphia with her husband and dog.



Adam Ifshin

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Adam Ifshin is Founder and CEO of DLC Management Corp., which he founded in 1991. Since then, he has grown DLC into one of the nation's premier owners and operators of retail real estate, and one of the most active acquirers of assets with value added potential. Mr. Ifshin oversees DLC's acquisitions and dispositions, capital markets activities, redevelopments, joint ventures, and corporate strategy. As a principal, he has been involved in over \$4.5 billion of real estate transactions. Mr. Ifshin received a BA, cum laude, from Williams College, with honors degrees in economics and history, and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. Mr. Ifshin is a member of the Board of Trustees of the International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC), a member of the Executive Board of the Board of Trustees of ICSC, and a full member of the Urban Land Institute (ULI).



Luis Arturo Jimenez-Castillo

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Luis Jimenez Castillo is a Professional Lecturer at the Driehaus College of Business, Management and Entrepreneurship of DePaul University. He earned his Ph.D. in Business Administration at the Business School from the Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) in Worcester, MA. His research interests are internationalization, strategy, corporate entrepreneurship, family firms, and sustainability. In addition, Luis has experience teaching management, strategy, entrepreneurship, and innovation courses. As a family business practitioner, Luis served as the Chairman of the Board of his family's firm in Mexico. He has also consulted for other family-managed companies in the Jalisco area.



Arran Joyce

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While a student at the University of Vermont, Arran was a Lead Student Coordinator during the 2014 and 2015 Family Enterprise Case Competitions. After graduating in 2015, Arran spent 4 years at General Electric in their Power and Oil & Gas businesses, holding a variety of positions in the Finance and M&A departments. Arran is currently a Manager in the Private Equity Services practice at Alvarez & Marsal, specializing in operational due diligence and performance improvement for private equity clients.



Jim Keller

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Green Mountain Business Consultants
United States

Jim Keller is the President of Green Mountain Business Consultants, a consulting business solving a diversity of issues for international enterprises. He is also the retired President of Rengo Packaging Inc., a packaging manufacturer located in Honolulu, Hawaii. Mr. Keller received a Bachelor of Science from the University of Vermont and was previously the Interim President of the UVM Foundation. He received his Master of Business Administration from Dartmouth College. Mr. Keller was a past Chairperson of the University of Vermont Foundation and the Chair of the Indigenous Education Foundation of Tanzania, which provides for co-education opportunities in rural Tanzania Communities.



Michael Keller

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Retired Managing Partner at Gallagher,
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Mike is a retired managing partner of Gallagher, Flynn and Company, LLP, a regional CPA firm headquartered in South Burlington VT. In addition to firm management, Mike was responsible for providing accounting, tax, and general advisory services to closely held or investor-owned businesses in a variety of industries. Mike was a former chair of the Vermont Board of Accountancy as well as New England Peer Review, Inc. Mike currently does advisory board work for family-owned businesses.



Basma Khoja

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Dr. Basma Khoja is an assistant professor at the King Abdulaziz University. She serves as the Director of Partnerships and Industrial Relationships at the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Center, and teaches Entrepreneurship, Management of Organizations, and Negotiations and Conflict Resolution. Her research focuses on family business issues within the Saudi Arabian context. She is a passionate advocate for the inclusion of women in family businesses and has guided numerous students in understanding complex family business dynamics. Dr. Khoja's active involvement in her own family's ventures and her position on their board of directors provide her with first-hand insight into the unique challenges and opportunities family businesses face. This experience, combined with her academic expertise, makes her a sought-after mentor and resource for students and peers. Dr. Khoja earned her master's degree in Entrepreneurship in Applied Technologies from the University of South Florida, and doctorate from the Worcester Polytechnic Institute in the United States.



Steve Legler

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TSI Heritage
Canada

Steve Legler grew up as the heir apparent to his father in the family business that "Steve Sr." had started before "Steve Jr." was born. After dutifully completing his MBA to prepare himself to eventually take over their steel fabricating business, a liquidity event changed those plans pretty quickly. So instead, Steve spent a couple of decades running their "Family Office" even though that term was still not well known. Steve eventually got wind of the "Family Enterprise Advisor Program" in Canada, and somehow ended up there, just in time to have his "calling" in his late 40's. He has since re-oriented his work towards helping family businesses, while concentrating on the family circle. Steve immersed himself in coaching, mediation and facilitation training, and continues to study Bowen Family Systems Theory. He is the author of SHIFT your Family Business (2014) and the Interdependent Wealth (2019).



Eli Lesser-Goldsmith

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Healthy Living

United States

Eli has helped build and now Leads a 350 person company, across two states in one of the most competitive industries in America: supermarkets. In almost 40 years of business, Healthy Living Market has emerged as Vermont's premiere natural foods supermarket, selling a highly curated selection of natural, organic, and local products. Healthy Living is Vermont's largest natural foods store, and a proud part of the three communities it operates in; South Burlington VT, Williston VT and Saratoga Springs NY. When he's not working, he's laying down turns on Vermont's highest peaks in the winter and on its most twisty roads in the summer on his Ducati, or relaxing on Lake Champlain with his friends and family. He lives in Chittenden County with wife Portia, sons Ace, Beau and Wes and their fierce house cat Princess Fiona.



Peyton Leveillee

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Teamshares

United States

Peyton is an alumnus of Grossman School and is returning as a sixth-year judge. He works at Teamshares, a venture-backed financial technology company that acquires small businesses to transition them to employee ownership. At Teamshares, Peyton advises on the portfolio of automotive repair businesses and is involved in product management of financial technology software development. Peyton joined Teamshares after partnering with them to transition his father's company, Brad's Service Center, to employee ownership.



Olivia Machanic

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Unilever

United States

Olivia Machanic is a fourth-generation Catamount and alumna of the UVM Grossman School of Business. While at UVM, she was the Finance Chair of the Student Government Association, the Manager of the Women's Varsity Lacrosse Team, and the President of the Inter-Residence Association. She competed in multiple case competitions, was a member of the organizing committee for SG-FECC, and co-founded the Grossman Deans Cup – UVM's first in-house case competition. She graduated from UVM in 2020 and joined Unilever's Supply Chain Future Leaders Program. She completed four rotations in waste mitigation, factory management, retail sales, and demand planning. Now, she is an Associate Strategic Planning Manager, leading Unilever's collaborative manufacturing transformation.



Natalie McVeigh

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EisnerAmper

United States

Natalie McVeigh is the Managing Director of the Center for Individual and Organizational Performance and the Center for Family Business Excellence Group at EisnerAmper, with more than 15 years of experience. Natalie's role at the firm is working with high-net-worth families to help them reach their personal and professional goals and to assist with the transition issues. Natalie's expertise is in complex conflict resolution, with a certificate in mediation, specializing in interest-based negotiation. She has specialized experience in building and developing cohesive teams through utilizing assessments and creating training curricula. Natalie also has expertise in team building, administering and analyzing assessment data, management consulting, developing teams and leaders, board and governance, project management, facilitation, training, systems theory and coaching.



Olivia Mekkelsen

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United States

Olivia Mekkelsen is a Grossman School of Business (2019) & FECC alum. In 2022, she received her MBA from SNHU in Business Management & Marketing. Since graduating, she has taken on management roles in her family's business, Mekkelsen RV in East Montpelier, VT. Responsibilities include managing rental, finance and sales departments. Mekkelsen RV is a family owned and operated business providing sales, service, parts and rentals. Olivia is part of the transition to the third generation of being a family owned and operated business. Olivia's minor at UVM was Sports Management. Following this interest, she coached several sports for various age levels at U-32. Most recently, she was appointed as the U-32 Varsity Girls Basketball Coach for the 2024-25 season. She looks forward to this important work supporting youth in her community. Olivia is excited and honored to be returning to the Family Enterprise Case Competition as a judge.



Stephanie Meunier

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Stephanie joined the Grossman School of Business as the Cooperative Education Director after holding various leadership roles with notable organizations: PwC, TD Bank, Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development, IBM, Cox Automotive, Champlain College, and Generac. Her experience gives her a deep understanding of organizational talent management dynamics and the ability to build strategic partnerships. Her prior clients and peers note her drive to get things done with a blend of strategic vision, operational expertise, and interpersonal skills to adapt quickly in varied organizational settings. Stephanie is an alum of the UVM School of Business.



William Millhiser

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City University of New York / Lodge Cast Iron
United States

Will Millhiser is an owner and director of Lodge Cast Iron, a family business in Tennessee since 1896. He contributed to a new family stock restriction agreement, new company bylaws, a 5th-gen succession plan, recruiting the first non-family CEO, expanding the board w/ 3 independent directors, and initiating a family council. In his “day job”, Will is a business school professor at the Zicklin School of Business, Baruch College, City University of New York. He teaches undergraduates, graduate students, and executives how to think about Operations Management and Analytics; he has particular interests in business decision-making under risk and uncertainty. Will received the Baruch College Presidential Excellence Award for Distinguished Teaching, 2013, and the Zicklin School of Business Teaching Excellence Award, 2014.



James Mount

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Mount Family Group LTD
United States

James has embodied the spirit of entrepreneurship from an early age. The Mount Family started their business in 1982, where he worked part-time during high school. James joined the family business full time in 1997 following a successful education and career in retail management and training. James and his business partner Karen Mount purchased the business from his parents over two transactions in 2009 and 2010. Mount Family Group owns and operates a dozen franchised Westaff offices throughout the Northeast, and has won many awards including the franchised Business of the Year from Westaff and the Jeffrey Butland Family Owned Business of the Year award from the SBA. James has been involved in FECC since its inaugural year, serving FECC as both a judge and as a lead judge.



Will Nedds

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United States

William Nedds is an advisory manager and automation development lead within KPMG's Federal advisory practice. After completing his undergraduate studies at the Grossman School of Business in 2016, William began advisory and consulting work within the government space. Now, six years later and after completing his MBA, William oversees the standup of business process optimization and robotic process automation programs within the U.S. Federal Government. Currently residing in Washington, DC, William is thrilled to return to judge GSB FECC.



Warren Nilsson

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United States

Dr. Warren Nilsson is an Associate Professor of Social Innovation at the University of Cape Town and a Visiting Lecturer at the University of Vermont Grossman School of Business. At UCT, Warren served as the Director of the MPhil in Inclusive Innovation Program and the Co-Director of the Rockefeller Global Fellowship Program on Social Innovation. Warren's current research focuses on the interplay between love, high-quality connections and social innovation, drawing on organizational ethnographies from five continents. He also serves as co-director of the Center for Organizational Wellbeing, which is currently piloting an innovative relational learning approach called "Org School" that helps organizations more closely align their internal cultures with their external social change goals.



Bradley Opsahl

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Liberty Mutual

United States

Brad Opsahl (he/him) is the VP & Senior Director of State Operations managing product portfolios in California, Washington, & Nevada. He is responsible for generating profitable growth in Liberty Mutual's auto lines of business in these markets. Prior to this general management role, Brad has worked across functions including product, finance, risk analytics, and operations. He is an alumnus of the Grossman School of Business, class of 2012, and is still a resident of Vermont where he lives with his husband enjoying all the seasonal activities Vermont has to offer.



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University of Antwerp

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Ine Paeleman is an Associate Professor of Entrepreneurial Finance at the University of Antwerp (Belgium). She received her Ph.D. in Business Administration from Ghent University (Belgium). She was a visiting scholar at the Carlson School of Management (University of Minnesota, USA). Ine's research interests cross the traditional boundaries between entrepreneurship, management, and finance disciplines. She has published in journals including Journal of Management Studies, Journal of World Business, Journal of Business Ethics, British Journal of Management, Small Business Economics, Economic History Review, The Journal of Technology Transfer, Venture Capital, and European Journal of Finance. She co-founded the Antwerp Centre for Entrepreneurship Research (AntwerpCER).



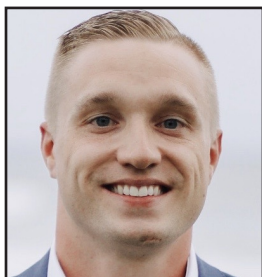
Rodolfo Paiz

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Rodolfo Paiz is one of the world's leading experts on governance in family systems, a trusted advisor to complex business families in 30+ countries, CEO of a third-gen multinational family office and business group, and Independent Director on three Boards. He and the consulting team at Fidelius reduce friction and improve results by focusing on the growth and well-being of both client families and their family members, and by integrating the strategic business/work/wealth issues with the day-to-day human-emotional elements. FFI Fellow, GEN Faculty, 2022 International Award. Creator of the "Iceberg Analysis" and "Brick Wall" models. Pilot, photographer, chess player, author, triathlete. Native English/Spanish, some French/Italian/Portuguese. Lives in Guatemala and New York with his wife.



Alex Palmer

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ALDI

United States

Alex Palmer is a Director of Operations for ALDI, an international, family-owned discount grocer. Alex began his career with ALDI after graduating Cum Laude from UVM. In his tenure with ALDI, he has led operations teams in 9 states and two countries. Following ALDI's 400 store acquisition of another grocery chain in the Southeast, Alex is currently leading a project team responsible for managing store conversions to the ALDI format. He lives in West Palm Beach, Florida with his wife and daughter.



Lauck Parke

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Retired (UVM School of Business)
United States

Former Associate Professor of Management at the University of Vermont School of Business, teaching courses in management, leadership, and organizational development. Served as the Vice President for Undergraduate Education from 2001-2008.



Karolien Pouwels-Koopman

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Koopman Logistics Group
The Netherlands

Karolien is the co-owner of the family enterprise Koopman Logistics Group, based in the Netherlands. Koopman operates in automotive, cargo, and parcel logistics. Founded in 1923, the company conducts business across Northwestern Europe. Karolien serves on the shareholders' board alongside her brothers, sister, and nephews, collectively representing the fourth generation of ownership. She is also the chair of the shareholders' board for a company in the food industry and she serves as an advisor to several family-owned businesses. Her primary focus and responsibility lie in managing the dynamics within the family and between the family and the business. Additionally, Karolien is a board member of various social organizations and actively participates in local politics. She has four adult children, all of whom are involved with Koopman but hold jobs outside the company.



Erinn Ryen

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Hobart and William Smith Colleges
United States

Dr. Erinn Ryen has over 20 years of experience in consulting, conducting research (e.g., circular economy, food and electronics waste, evaluating environmental impact, and policy), and teaching courses covering topics of entrepreneurship and business sustainability. Currently, Dr. Ryen is a visiting Assistant Professor in the Management and Entrepreneurship program at Hobart and William Smith Colleges and formerly an Associate Professor at Wells College. Additionally, Dr. Ryen is an active volunteer in her community and recently led the development of the Town of Brighton's 2023 Climate Action Plan. She has a Bachelor of Science from Cornell University, Master in Public Administration from Syracuse, Master of Science from State University of New York's College of Environmental Science and Forestry, and a Ph.D. in Sustainability from the Rochester Institute of Technology.



Wendy Sage-Hayward

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Family Enterprise Canada
Canada

Wendy, an educator, author, consultant, and family business owner, with 30+ years of experience guiding business leaders, family firms, and their boards. She serves as Academic Director at Family Enterprise Canada and a senior consultant at the Family Business Consulting Group. Wendy's tenure includes 20+ years as a fifth-generation director in a 135-year-old U.S. family firm. Presently, she operates an agricultural tourism business in the Southern Gulf Islands with her family. Wendy shares her expertise in two co-authored books, "Human Resources in Family Business: Maximizing the Power of Your People" and "Own It! How to Develop a Family Enterprise Owner's Mindset at Every Age". Her passion lies in supporting business families in transitioning their enterprises to future generations.



Steve Schlesinger

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Sago

United States

Steve has been in the marketing research industry for over 35 years, starting his career as a project manager and then working his way up to lead Schlesinger Group as CEO for 25 years, where he created the strategy and vision for Schlesinger Group, now Sago as the world's leading data solutions and research technology company. In November 2022, he assumed the additional role of Executive Chairman to continue to help drive the company's growth and digital transformation. A graduate of the University of Vermont with a Bachelor of Science in Biochemistry, Steve serves on the board of directors of Inspire.com, the advisory board of Brrrn, the advisory board of The University of Vermont Foundation and the Advisory Board of Michigan State University Master of Science in Marketing Research Program. His numerous passions include innovation and technology, as well as tennis, golf, and travel. He is married with two grown-up children and two grandsons.



Tyson Seely

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J.M. Huber Corporation

United States

Tyson is a fifth-generation member of the Huber family, which owns the J.M. Huber Corporation – a nearly 150-year-old manufacturing and specialty materials company. For over twenty years he has served on numerous boards of the company as well as a leader within family governance. Professionally, Tyson has built a career leading Investor Relations for companies such as Keurig Dr Pepper, Forrester Research and, most recently, Crane NXT. Tyson is a Vermont native, having grown up in Woodstock and he holds an MBA from the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth College as well as a Bachelor of Arts degree from Colgate University. He currently lives in Concord, MA with his wife, Shannon, and two young daughters.



Bruce Simons

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Simons Real Estate Group

United States

Bruce developed a national portfolio and brought decades of experience in overseeing owned assets and joint ventures. Adept at recognizing and capitalizing on opportunities at the top and the bottom of the market, Bruce puts the company's capital to work developing and acquiring assets around the country. His high-level perspective has long helped investors avoid getting caught up in emotion when making strategic business decisions. Root Center for Advanced Recovery, Chairperson of the Board of Directors Kingswood Oxford School, Board Member Hartford Stage Company, Honorary Board Member University of North Carolina, BS, 1985.



Henry Slauson

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Flexaseal

United States

Hank Slauson is Chairman & Founder of Flexaseal Engineered Seals & Systems LLC. Flexaseal is a leading global manufacturer of close-tolerance and custom-engineered mechanical seals and systems with over 80,000 SKUs. Having manufacturing and repair facilities in VT (100% solar powered), LA, and three in TX, NY, WA, Flexaseal prides itself on supplying sealing solutions in the time required and at a fair price point. Further, in 1996, Hank and his Brazilian business partner started a sister manufacturing company with four branches in Sao Paulo Brazil. There are 60+ employees at these locations. Flexaseal has grown from an original one-person operation to 250+ employees worldwide doing business in 50+ countries. It remains a family-owned business with an additional merged partner added in 2020.



Myron Sopher

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Intrack Investment Management INC
United States

As managing partner of the firm founded in 1992, Myron has strived to grow the business by building relationships with his clients and their advisors. Myron was Vice President of Computer Aided Planning and National Account Sales Manager for Herman Miller, Inc., Zeeland, Michigan. His business career started with Burlington Industries, in New York City and American Hospital Supply Corporation, in Evanston, Illinois where he was Regional Manager for ten states, later becoming their National Accounts Manager. Myron served as Chairperson of the Vermont Council on Economic Education, is a past board member of the Vermont CFA Society, is a board member of the Injury and Health Management Solutions, Inc., and is the former Chairman of Northern Reliability, Inc. Myron is also an active member of several angel investment groups.



Chuck Tauck

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Tauck Inc
United States

Chuck Tauck worked for Tauck Tours in various roles until 1992, and after completing a graduate program at Cornell in 1994, returned to organize his family's business for his third generation succession. Today, the company is over 90 years old and already involved in 4th generation planning. In 1996, Chuck joined a group transforming a New York Dairy farm into a vineyard. Today, Sheldrake Point Winery has 52 acres of grapes, produces 12,000 cases of wine and hosts 25,000 visitors annually, and is recognized as one of the top wineries in the Finger Lakes. Chuck graduated from the University of Vermont in 1976.



Jim Tessmer

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Brown Brothers Harriman
United States

Jim Tessmer is the Head of Digital Product Strategy at Brown Brothers Harriman (BBH). Founded in 1818 by George and John Brown, BBH is America's oldest private investment bank and retains much of the core values established by this family business over 200 years ago. Jim is responsible for leading the digital product development lifecycle, focusing on discovering, incubating and delivering BBH's most differentiating digital solutions. Jim's career spans operational, technical, product and consulting roles, including Department Head for Global Product and Platform Solutions at State Street, Senior Manager at Deloitte Consulting and Director of Digital Consulting at Genpact. While the majority of Jim's career has been in the Financial Services sector, Jim also has experience in Healthcare and Public Sector industries. Jim holds a BS in business from Skidmore College and a MS in Information Systems from Boston University.



Júlia Tobak

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University of Pannonia
Hungary

Dr. Júlia Tobak is a research fellow from Hungary with a professional background spanning academia and the profit sector. Her expertise in entrepreneurship, business management, and practical food industry experience aligns with her active role in projects, events, and startup judging promoting innovation and entrepreneurship. She has a strong commitment in the investigation of family businesses because she comes from a family business founded by her father. This is the driving force behind her openness and curiosity to understand the specialties of family-owned companies. In her previous research, she focused on the success factors and succession in family businesses. Beyond her professional pursuits, she's an amateur triathlete and a Spinning instructor.



Carlos Vincentelli

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Alvarez & Marsal
United States

Carlos Vincentelli is a Managing Director with Alvarez & Marsal's Private Equity Performance Improvement practice in Miami. Mr. Vincentelli specializes in value creation, performance improvement, operations excellence, margin management, organizational realignment, OPEX cost reduction and enterprise transformation. Prior to joining A&M, Mr. Vincentelli worked with Arthur D. Little and Capgemini, focusing on operational excellence for corporate and private equity backed companies. Mr. Vincentelli started his career in the Food & Beverage industry working for Del Monte Fresh Produce managing one of its flagship product lines for North America. Mr. Vincentelli earned a bachelor's degree in food and resources economics from the University of Florida and an MBA from Emory University, Goizueta Business School.



Jeffery Wacksman

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Loeb, Block & Partners LLP
United States

Jeff a 1982 graduate of UVM is a senior partner at the law firm of Loeb, Block & Partners LLP. He started his legal career at Shearman & Sterling after graduating from Cornell Law School in 1985. Jeff advises ultra-high-net-worth individuals, family offices, and fiduciaries in all aspects of their legal, business, and financial activities. He assists clients in business and investment structuring, corporate mergers, financings and asset acquisitions and divestitures, including real estate. He advises those same clients in their domestic and international trust and estate planning, family succession planning, and philanthropic giving. Jeff has served on numerous Boards, including open and closed-end public mutual funds, private foundations, public charities, and closely held corporations.



Randy Waesche

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Resource Management, LLC
United States

D. Randolph Waesche (Randy) earned his Certified Financial Planner designation in 1977 from the College of Financial Planning in Denver, Colorado. He has spent 45 years building his financial advisory firm Resource Management, LLC. to national prominence before selling it in 2023. Financial Times has recognized this company as America's top Registered Investment Advisory firms for seven consecutive years. Money and WORTH magazines have recognized Mr. Waesche among the top financial advisors in the country. He was the financial expert for WWL TV and appeared live every other Tuesday on his "Stretching Your Dollar" segment. A Fellow of the Family Firm Institute, Mr. Waesche is active in his community and serves on several boards. Today, Randy and his daughter Beatrice work at their family enterprise advisory firm, the Race Rock, LLC.



Robyn Worrall

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RJW Pharma
United States

Robyn graduated from UVM in 2014 from the Business School, and also participated in FECC her senior year. After graduation, she moved to NYC and worked in sales before deciding to join her family business, which is focused in the pharmaceutical industry. After working there for a few years, she moved into Business Development at a generic pharmaceutical company called Lannett managing mergers and acquisitions for the firm. Using the knowledge gained at Lannett, Robyn recently started a sister company under her family business focused on growing and diversifying the core business model her mom built over 30 years ago.





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