Speakers 2013

J. Robert (Bob) Collins  
Bob brings a diverse background to Texas A&M University-Commerce having served as a Fortune 500 corporate officer - responsible for strategy, planning, and R&D - and now as a member of a university faculty where he focuses on entrepreneurship. He also advises small business, government, and educational organizations on strategy and planning. He has previously been involved in the formation and spin-off of two high tech start-up companies. Dr. Collins has a long history of community service currently serving as a founding member of the Collin College Board of Trustees and as a member of the Farmersville EDC.

Leslie Toombs  
Leslie Toombs is Professor of Marketing in the College of Business and Entrepreneurship at Texas A&M University Commerce. Prior to joining the A&M Commerce Business Faculty she served as Professor of Management and Pinkie Roden Chair of Entrepreneurship in the School of Business at The University of Texas of the Permian Basin. In addition, she was the Director of the Jan and Ted Roden Center for Entrepreneurship and a Sam Walton Fellow. Dr. Toombs has consulted and worked with small businesses through the Small Business Institute program and through her position as Executive Vice President of CMR Creative Marketing Resources, Inc. She has delivered workshops on topics including strategic planning, managing conflict effectively, time management, quality management, case writing, developing entrepreneurship boot camps and effective use of business analysis tools in the classroom. Leslie is widely published and active professionally. She currently serves as Editor of the Academy of Management Best Paper Proceedings.

Charles Helm  
Charles is a successful entrepreneur from Hopkins County. He is Past Director and Chairman of the Board, Best Western International (Governs over 4000 hotel properties in over 90 countries); Past President Hopkins County Economic Development Corporation; Past President Hopkins County Regional Civic and Convention Center and is currently involved in developing hotel projects as President of Helm Hotels Group.

Steve Shwiff  
Dr. Shwiff is Professor of Economics at Texas A&M University - Commerce and guest professor at the
Joe Duan

Joseph Daun is head of the Department of Art at Texas A&M University-Commerce where he has served and taught since 2008. During his academic career, Joe has shown in numerous art galleries and spaces across the United States including a prestigious artist’s residency at ArtPace in San Antonio, One person Exhibit at Hallwalls Contemporary Art Center in Buffalo, NY, a large installation at Fotouhi-Cramer Gallery in New York, a one-person exhibit at 621 Gallery in Tallahassee, Florida, a large installation at Transylvania University in Lexington, Kentucky and, a one person exhibit at Texas A&M University in Corpus Christi, Texas. His work is in numerous university and private collections, including the University of Texas at San Antonio, University of Central Oklahoma, the University of South Texas, and the University of Central Oklahoma.

John Hill

John first became interested in pottery by chance some five years ago, after graduating from Texas A&M University-Commerce with a bachelor’s degree in social work and counseling. He worked at the Morris Recreation Center as a student worker and got the opportunity to work with the Outdoor Adventure Program at A&M-C, eventually leading to a director position. “A couple of my student workers were ceramics majors and they took me to the ceramics lab and I just never went back,” Hill took five semesters with Barbara Frey to help him understand the basics. He is now an entrepreneur and describes himself as “a full time dad and part time potter”. He works primarily in functional forms while trying to branch into some sculptural work. All of his functional work is food safe, microwave and dishwasher safe, and most of all joyful to use and look at.
Vaughn Wascovich

Vaughn Wascovich received his BFA from Youngstown State University. After several years in advertising and working as a freelance photographer, he returned to school to earn his MFA at Columbia College in Chicago. He currently lives and works from Commerce, Texas where he is an Associate Professor of Photography at Texas A&M University-Commerce. Vaughn grew up in a dying steel town and has made an interesting journey from the steel mills to entrepreneur to academia. His photographic interest is landscapes where he uses his cameras to try and understand stories of place and where he is in the world.

Brad Gottshalk

Brad Gottshalk is a seasoned commercial banker who joined the North Texas SBDC in 2011. He began a 25-year banking career in 1985 with the US Department of the Treasury’s Comptroller of the Currency as a Commissioned National Bank Examiner. Over the next 12 years he served as president of banks in Creede/Lake City, and Montrose, Colorado. After his return to Texas, Brad began leveraging his extensive commercial and SBA lending experience with the North Texas SBDC in Paris.

Mario Hayek

Dr. Mario Hayek is Assistant Professor of Management at Texas A&M University - Commerce. He has launched a number of new ventures internationally and currently maintains a controlling interest in multiple businesses within the tourism and commercial real estate industries in South America. Mario teaches graduate courses in Strategy and Management Skills.

Sue Malone

Sue is the largest SBA lender in the country and for the last several years the largest SBA lender by volume. Sue has funded over 30,000 small business loans. In addition, she makes sure small businesses voices are not forgotten in Washington DC.

Amaju Loving

An assistant professor of finance at TAMU-Commerce, Dr. Loving currently serves as the program director for the financial planning certificate program at TAMU-Commerce and teaches both Financial Planning and Finance courses. His research interests include racial differences in wealth, personal financial planning education, and client/planner interaction in financial planning engagements.

Roger Elliott

Roger is a longtime resident and successful
entrepreneur from our region having been born and educated here and currently residing in Hopkins County. He has a broad range of business experience and is probably best known entrepreneurially for the success of Copy Products, Inc. which grew to become one of the largest copier dealerships in the U.S.A. He has been involved in numerous businesses and investment activities including CPI Imaging, LP, The CPI Group, LLC and ACCESS E-Forms, LP to name a few. Mr. Elliott has long been involved in community service. A sampling of his many activities include being a founding member of Shannon Oaks Church where he has served as an elder for 35 years, director of Alliance Bank for 25 years, one of the founders of the Hopkins County Medical Foundation, National Jamboree Leader for the Boy Scouts of America, longtime mentor to misdirected teenage boys, and a mentor for many successful young business people in the area. He has been married for 53 years to Deloris Ann Miller Elliott and is the father of two children. He is a licensed private pilot and classic car enthusiast and is passionate about helping young men find their way to success. Roger’s business philosophy is worth noting: • Believe in yourself and your dream, • Find a way to measure “Success” without counting your money.

• You do not get rich working, but investing. Invest in People 1st.

• Live one day at a time to the fullest.

• Find a passion for what you do and love every minute of it.

• Plan your work and work your plan.

• Always inspect what you expect and you and your team will succeed together.

Bob Landon

Bob Landon is a CPA and has earned his MBA. He worked in the finance field for 23 years until leaving the corporate world in 2004 to start Landon Winery. Bob’s business experience was focused in financial and economic analysis, including pricing. He has a passion for making quality wine going back to 1990 when he started making wine in his basement. Landon Winery has grown to be one of the largest wineries in Texas and has won many medals, awards and accolades. Landon Winery has three licensed locations with two being open to the public. Bob’s wife Katie is the accountant for the winery and is
actively involved in the business.

Benjamin Smithee

Benjamin Smithee is CEO and co-founder of SPYCH Market Analytics, a successful marketing research company. At SPYCH, Ben successfully lead the creative team to serve an array of the world’s top global brands such as McDonald’s, eBay, Coca cola, Pfizer, Kroger, GEICO, Windows, FIAT and more. He has been labeled as “true innovator” and was nominated as one of the Top 10 Youth Marketing Professionals in 2010. Ben is an experienced entrepreneur and has extensive knowledge in current market research practices utilizing social media and the internet.

Tracy Irby

Tracy Irby is a small business entrepreneur having owned and operated several small businesses. She has both a BBA and MBA from Texas A & M University - Commerce. Tracy is now a Business Advisor with the Paris SBDC, an independent insurance agent, and operates a successful online self-defense business. She utilizes social media extensively in each of her professional and business ventures.

Lissa Duty

Lissa Duty founded her social media consulting firm in 2009 after discovering a passion for leveraging online social media platforms to brand clients and small businesses. She uses her energy and marketing talents to assist her clients in growing their business and network via social networking websites, such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter. She is currently Assistant Organizer for the DFW Social Media Marketing Group, which has over 1000 members and growing continually, Assistant Director for Biz Link Global, a national professional networking group and Organizer for the DFW Internet Marketing “Twitter” Group. She has been recognized by She Takes on The World as one of 25 Wonder Women, along with the likes of women such as Arianna Huffington, Forbes Women and Ali Brown.

Landon Ledford

Landon Ledford is a Leading Brand Strategist for SPYCH Market Analytics. He specializes in connecting brands with consumers. His performance, knowledge and experience in the field led to him being honored as one of “Dallas top 30 under 30” future business leaders. In addition to Landon’s leading strategic role at SPYCH, he has also served in consultant and speaker roles involving entrepreneurial marketing, digital/social media marketing, and brand strategy issues.
John Kincade

John Kincade is a shareholder in the Commercial Litigation practice of Winstead PC and former co-chair of the firm’s Financial Services Industry Group. His practice includes business disputes, including fiduciary duty and partnership/corporate derivative disputes; securities litigation, arbitration & SEC enforcement; financial institutions litigation; business, commercial and insurance regulatory litigation; corporate litigation; IP, patent and trade secret litigation; and constitutional litigation. John is involved in a number of professional and community organizations and regularly speaks on various topics of interest in broader business law.

Jim Struwe

Jim Struwe is a seasoned accountant and serial entrepreneur having assembled almost 40 years of corporate and small business experience. He previously was Controller and VP of Finance for a publicly held contractor and began his small business ownership in 1992 with one of the two different silicon wafer reclamation companies. Jim joined the North Texas SBDC as a business advisor in 2011, and is co-owner of Audrey’s Fabric & Accessories of Sulphur Springs with his wife Audrey.

Bettye Lynn

Ms. Lynn is a partner of LYNN, ROSS & GANNAWAY, LLP. She is certified as a specialist in labor and employment law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization. Ms. Lynn practices exclusively in management labor and employment law and represents employers in both the public and private sectors. Her practice includes:

• Representing cities in all aspects of civil service.
• Training managers and supervisors on effective employment practices.
• Counseling clients on preventing employee claims and litigation.
• Investigating employee complaints.
• Advising clients on all employment related federal and state laws.
• Assisting employers in preventing unionization of employees.
• Negotiating meet and confer and collective bargaining agreements and advising on contract interpretation.
• Litigating complex employment law issues, including constitutional claims and employee wage claims.
Ms. Lynn represents cities and counties across the State of Texas and private-sector clients, including employers in the manufacturing, healthcare, retail, and service arena.

Kurtay Ogunc

Dr. Kurtay Ogunc is an Assistant Professor of Finance and Director of the MS Finance program in the College of Business and Entrepreneurship. He teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in investments, financial derivatives, advanced portfolio management, corporate finance and financial risk management. Kurtay has broad financial management experience in the private sector and in the public sector in addition to his academic credentials. He has founded two companies and is the recipient of the 2010 Chancellor’s Teaching Excellence award given by the Texas A&M University System. 2000.

Thomas R. Helfand

Thomas R. Helfand is a shareholder and past Chairman of the Taxation and Private Business practice of Winstead PC. He is Board Certified in the specialty of taxation. He has broad tax and general business experience, particularly in limited liability company, partnership, corporate, real estate and finance matters. Due to the breadth of his experience and aptitudes for client service, Tom also serves as outside general counsel for several major clients. Tom currently serves as the Chair of the Business and Transactions Department and previously has served as a member of Winstead’s Board of Directors and as the firm’s Chief Operating Officer and Dallas Managing Shareholder.

Mary Frances (Frannie) Miller

Frannie teaches Economics courses at Texas A&M University-Commerce. She is completing her doctorate in public policy and political economy at UT-Dallas. In her graduate program at UT-Dallas she completed a certification program in Geographic Information Systems. Working with John Atabaev and Amanda Turley she has helped to start a GIS club on the TAMU-C campus that involves students in working on various GIS projects in our Northeast Texas region. Prior to her employment at TAMU-C Frannie worked for the New Mexico Department of Agriculture and was charged with coordinating information across local, state, and federal land management agencies.

William (Willie) H. Hornberger

William H. Hornberger is a tax lawyer at Jackson Walker L.L.P. His tax practice emphasizes transactional and international tax matters and tax controversy issues. Willie is a lawyer and CPA. He
Marc Willson is well-known as an operations expert and has counseled countless retailers in areas of marketing and customer service, merchandising, social media, and financials and cash flow. He started his retail career in 1975 as co-owner of the largest distributor of Earth Shoes in the U.S. Since then he has held executive positions with retailers such as Britches of Georgetowne, Crown Books, Circuit City, The Bicycle Exchange, Ecampus.com and Storetrax. In 2009, he opened the world’s first energy efficiency store in Dallas for Current Energy, LLC, a company funded partially by Ross Perot, Jr. Since joining the SBDC network as a Retail and Restaurant Consultant, Marc has delivered over 300 seminars and assisted over 1000 retailers and restaurateurs throughout the country.

Chris A. Myers, Ph.D. is Associate Professor of Marketing at Texas A & M University - Commerce. His marketing research focuses on the antecedents of branding, emotion in advertising, cross-cultural determinates of the effectiveness of brands, and technology mediated learning. He has published in the Journal of Promotion Management, Services Marketing Quarterly, Journal of Product and Brand Management, International Journal of Business Research and Baylor University Medical Center Proceedings. Additionally, in the sociology and medical area, his research investigates the impact of acculturation and related factors upon the quality of care received by cardiovascular and diabetes patients. Dr. Myers is a graduate of the United States Air Force Academy and has 28 years
in the USAF Reserves flying B-52s as a Master Navigator. He was previously a team leader and project manager for Kimberly Clark in their “Huggies Pull-Ups” product line.