



**NC STATE** THINK AND DO  
THE EXTRAORDINARY

## **The McLauchlan Leadership Series Impact**





*Since establishing the McLauchlan Leadership Series in 2015, Russ and Cara McLauchlan have created an enduring legacy of philanthropy that has made an extraordinary impact on the development of leadership in Poole College of Management students.*

## McLauchlan Impact at Poole College of Management

In its short 29-year history, the Poole College of Management already has built a reputation for an integrated and collaborative approach to research, innovation and education that advances business and society. We foster learning, scholarship and service by focusing on developing and supporting ethical, inclusive leaders with an entrepreneurial mindset and analytical problem-solving capabilities.

No program has made more of an impact on the development of leadership in our students than the McLauchlan Leadership Series, a noncredit

professional development program that supports graduate-level leadership education through experiential learning. In the program, McLauchlan Leadership Fellows work to master the fundamentals of personal, team and organizational leadership.

What began with a generous gift, a strong vision and 22 MBA students grew to a movement impacting 127 students within the first five years. The McLauchlan Leadership Series has created a ripple effect, not only on the businesses and organizations led by these participants, but also throughout the

Poole College of Management. Before the initial investment that launched this series, the Poole College of Management did not have a formal leadership program, which prevented the college from competing with top business schools offering critical experiential learning opportunities. With the innovation of the McLauchlan Leadership Series, Poole College has enhanced educational tools to support both the Jenkins MBA curriculum and the undergraduate program. The college has also created a new Director of Leadership role to help guide leadership development.

### Graduate Education

Because of the McLauchlan Leadership Series' influence on the culture of the Jenkins MBA program, training incubated in the Series is now provided to all Jenkins MBA students through core leadership courses. Professional development coaching is now being used more often in the Jenkins MBA program; and, inspired by the McLauchlan program, key faculty have become certified in leadership coaching. In

2020, NC State's Graduate School approved a new Business Leadership Certificate at the college's request. This 12-credit certificate includes a required 1-credit Jenkins Leadership Challenge course that is modeled on a key component of the McLauchlan Leadership Series.

### Undergraduate Education

Though not specifically targeted toward undergraduates, the McLauchlan Leadership Series has positively impacted the Poole undergraduate program as well. The McLauchlans' philanthropy in support of leadership helped the Poole College leverage a gift from VF Corporation that made the delivery of the CliftonStrengths assessment — first previewed in the McLauchlan Leadership Series — available to all MBA students, undergraduates, faculty and staff. This renewed focus on leadership also led the college to create a new leadership program in 2018 to help undergraduates build leadership competencies.

**“Russ and Cara’s generosity to Poole College gives students the ability to build their leadership skills outside the classroom with the support of the college community. The McLauchlan Leadership Series has transformed the lives of over 150 graduate students with leadership coaching in an experiential learning environment. This support has also helped us rethink how we provide leadership education for all our students. Their commitment to training the leaders of tomorrow is a true testament of our Think and Do spirit.”**

— Frank Buckless, Stephen P. Zelnak Jr. Dean of the Poole College of Management



# McLauchlan Impact on Fellows

Participation in the McLauchlan Leadership Series has made an indelible impact on the Fellows themselves. At the end of the series, each fellow presents the results of a personal leadership challenge experience. Year after year, these presentations show the tremendous short-term impact of program participation. Fellows describe how they used the \$300 program stipend to challenge themselves in many aspects of self-leadership, including building technical and soft skills, reprioritizing aspects of their lives, overcoming fears, building empathy, sharing their skills with disadvantaged youth and even dealing with trauma.

In the spring of 2021, we surveyed 2015-2020 Fellows about the impact of the McLauchlan Leadership Series on their MBA program experience, career development and personal lives. We are pleased to share these highlights of the survey results:

- 100% said they are better leaders after participating in the program
- 100% said they would recommend the program to others
- 100% said the program positively impacted their experience in the Jenkins MBA program



Overcoming fears: Sahir Patel in midair with his Triangle Skydiving tandem jump partner. Skydiving is something that Patel — who has used a wheelchair for mobility for 15 years due to a spinal cord injury — has wanted to do since he was a young boy.

## Harry Raymond Tidaback 2015-2016 cohort

Harry is the vice president of sterile formulations for Nephron Pharmaceuticals. He earned a B.S. in environmental science and and B.A. in environmental chemistry. As an MBA student, he focused on learning the many facets of business in an effort to broaden his leadership skill set.

**“Of everything that occurred during my MBA, this was the absolute most effective item that showed me how important soft skills were and how to apply them. This literally changed who I am and my life.”**



**“I feel I gained more confidence in both my public speaking and my collaborations with others in both my MBA classes and work-based teams.”**

— LaVern Witherspoon, 2018-2019 cohort



## Larissa Via 2016-2017 cohort

Larissa is the corporate sustainability and public engagement coordinator at Planning Communities LLC. She is an environmental consultant who supports the marketing, communications and creative development of climate action strategy plans, metric tracking and collaborative tools at the community, municipal and state levels. She also works to integrate equity and best practices into planning solutions for equitable, healthy and sustainable community development.

**“The McLauchlan Leadership Program was one of the most valuable experiences of my MBA training. This program set the foundation I needed for my leadership training and lifelong dedication to personal development and self-awareness. I became more aware of my strengths**

**and learned how to lean into them through appreciating the uniqueness of what I offer. I learned the value of being a leader in my own life so that I may live in such a way that I inspire others to be a leader in their own lives. I gained greater insight into the value of authenticity and vulnerability, which requires deep courage, resulting in greater trust and confidence in oneself and in others. I challenged myself with a business improv course, and in addition to gaining a more creative sense of humor, I learned how to communicate my ideas with ease and create a safe space for others to be their authentic selves.**

**“It is my sincere wish that this program — or at least the key elements of it — were available for everyone going through the Jenkins MBA. This world needs authentic, bold and courageous leaders, and the McLauchlan program provided the opportunity for me to bring out those qualities within myself.”**



Changing futures

A desired outcome of the McLauchlan Leadership Series is career development. Ninety-four percent of survey respondents reported positive changes that have impacted not only their careers but also their futures:

- 72% said their salaries increased after graduation
- 34% reported being promoted within their organization
- 31% said they have moved to a higher position in a new company
- 41% noted they have changed their careers
- 25% said they have changed industries
- At least three participants said they have started their own businesses



Matthew Smith  
2018-2019 cohort

Matt spent several years working in the consulting industry for Deloitte, where he supported clients in the Northeast region in industries ranging from life sciences to banking and securities. Most recently, Matt has been working at Veradigm in a financial capacity, where he partners with business unit leaders to drive operational excellence.

**“The McLauchlan Leadership Series provided me with better insights and tools for managing others, both upward and downward. Since participating, I have advanced my career significantly: a new employer and a promotion with that employer.”**

Badri Yashwant Kuram  
2019-2020 cohort

Badri is a research analyst focused on growth and strategy at tech education startup Colaberry. Prior to pursuing his MBA, Badri worked at a leading services firm specializing in intellectual property, market research and competitive strategy for North American, European and Asian clients.

**“Before, as an analyst, I needed my projects to be perfect. Now, as a leader, I cannot focus on perfection; there is no time, and there are so many moving parts. My challenge helped me — now I expect people to do their job right!”**



**“I’m a more patient leader now. There are two sides to every problem — and sometimes six or eight sides. Take the time to do the due diligence, and be patient. Understand that your team has the technical know-how, and they know best. Before I would “take the monkey” and try to do everything. That wasn’t the best for the subteam or for building trust. I think my manager has seen a change in me and the team. Now, rather than taking things on themselves, they let me and people at my level work through the problem. I can see the difference between my work and the work of others who are overworked and frustrated.”**

— Carl Piland , 2019-2020 cohort

Changing lives

The program has also helped to define the personal values of participants, with 97% of survey respondents sharing life-changing impact.



Brittany Santore  
2019-2020 cohort

Brittany works at NC State in the Department of Biological and Agricultural Engineering. As the lead workshop and conferences coordinator for NC State Extension, Brittany supports over 45 workshops and at least two conferences a year in six program areas.

**“It’s not just about leadership but also how you approach each situation. Leadership is so much more than we think. It’s not just you leading others; it’s about how you lead yourself.”**

Al Bennah  
2015-2016 cohort

Al manages an agile team of software solutions architects who work across the technical stack at TiVo Corporation to customize and deliver solutions for enterprise customers in the television and entertainment industry.

**“Leadership is not only about the workplace; it’s about getting the best out of our relationships while making others feel valued. I learned this in the McLauchlan Leadership Series, and it helped me become a better listener and partner to my spouse and better leader to my children.”**



**“The McLauchlan Leadership Series taught me the importance of making sure my and my team members’ personal lives are taken care of in the context of work. People are critical to any mission, and so often people are forgotten and treated like machines. The program allowed me a moment to think about how I could become a better leader and person by accounting for the whole person.”**

— Nathan Sink, 2019-2020 cohort

**“The one-on-one coaching opened my eyes to the amount of time and energy I was giving to work at the expense of my family and personal interests. With coaching, I was able to realign and rebalance my personal and family commitments and do less at work.”**

— Heather O’Connor, 2017-2018 cohort



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