

Democratic Voice of Burma taps Executive MBA students for business growth

International business trip for RIT Executive Education features in-country corporate consulting

Saunders College of Business students from Rochester Institute of Technology are helping Myanmar's most trusted news source change its business model after the company spent more than two decades in exile.



The Executive MBA program at Saunders College of Business is collaborating with DVB Multimedia Group Co. Ltd. in Myanmar, formerly Burma. Known to residents as the Democratic Voice of Burma their case study is helping the media group transition from an exiled news source supported by donations, to a licensed commercial media company.

"Expectations for DVB are extremely high, because of the media market and industry players here in Myanmar," said Chris Hajecki, DVB director of business development. "To continue its mission, DVB must grow significantly and reinvest its earnings in developing its organization to better serve its audiences and advertisers."

Global Alumni Connections

Chris Hajecki began working for DVB in February 2015, following the completion of his executive MBA (EMBA) in 2013. Based on his history with the RIT Executive Education program, and his understanding of the changing political landscape in Myanmar, Hajecki contacted RIT to see if there was a way to work with students on the layers of change DVB had to manage.

Saunders Executive Education programs are designed for working professionals looking to enhance their careers through applied academic and corporate-focused learning experiences. The Executive MBA's emphasis on applied leadership, strategic thinking, global orientation, and innovation uniquely address the challenges DVB faces. Marty Lawlor,

See reverse...



Jeff Davis (far right) and Chris Hajecki (right) in Myanmar with in-country guides



Saunders College of BUSINESS EXECUTIVE EDUCATION

Executive Education students at Saunders College want more than a transfer of business and management theory and concepts. They seek a high level of engagement with faculty and their peers. The opportunity to discuss, argue, compete and collaborate with other professionals on strategic and topical issues and projects is an essential feature of the EMBA program, and one that has direct and immediate applications to their own professional development. Ranked #7 by *The Princeton Review*, the RIT EMBA delivers exactly these experiences.

#7

Online MBA
Princeton Review, 2017

- Attracts mid-to-upper level professionals wishing to hone their business and leadership skills in order to enhance their performance and position themselves for future opportunities
- On-campus and online program formats designed for flexibility and maximum student productivity
- Cohort-based program enables consistent team structure and group work
- AACSB accredited, 15- and 17-month programs
- The international seminar, a business and cultural education trip, allows students to serve as consultants to international organizations
- The Capstone Consulting Project distinguishes the Saunders EMBA experience by providing a rigorous learning experience for students and value-added outcomes for client companies

DAY ONE | career ready

- Strong industry connections, offering real world experiences in and outside of the classroom
- Among the world's oldest and largest cooperative educational programs
- 94% placement rates

DAY ONE | enterprising mindset

- Pioneering Biz 1-2 program
- #1 student innovation center, Venture Creations Incubator, and over 200 clubs to join
- Ranked #21 nationally for entrepreneurship

DAY ONE | stand out

- Over 80 minors available across all 9 RIT colleges
- Nationally recognized STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and math) programs
- Students develop unique personal brands that employers seek

DAY ONE | connected

- Small class sizes, 100% taught by faculty
- Low student to faculty ratios, and highly accessible faculty
- Plugged into over 118,000 RIT alumni and large university resources

EXECUTIVE EDUCATION: A Customized Approach

Saunders College of Business has a successful history of customizing corporate solutions to meet the unique needs of companies in a large range of industries. From ideation through course delivery, we work quickly and closely with clients to design and implement programs that address specific educational and training problems. Some Executive Education partnerships include:

PAYCHEX **Future Leaders Pipeline**

A series of six courses taught onsite at the company to a select group of high-potential employees introducing an array of business skills to future leaders. The success of the program led to a second iteration, with the second cohort being 50% larger than the first. Half of the first cohort continued on to achieve their EMBA.

ROCHESTER REGIONAL HEALTH **Chief Nursing Officer Development**

Seven courses taught at RIT for a highly-selective cohort of nursing leaders from among six different locations within the regional health system. The genesis of the customized program was based on the need for an internal nursing labor market that produces Chief Nursing Officers and other nurse administrators able to operate at senior executive levels.

CARESTREAM **Meeting Global Demands**

An annual program customized to meet specific requirements of a worldwide group of purchasing managers from 10 different countries. Customized offerings included: Negotiation; Disruptive Technology; Outsourcing: Good for the Economy or Evil; Salesmanship; and Finance for Non-Financial Managers.

... continued from reverse

senior lecturer and director of RIT's EMBA program, and Jeff Davis, associate director of the EMBA program, traveled to Myanmar to better understand DVB's challenges.

"RIT students give established companies something they need most: a fresh set of eyes," Davis said. "For RIT students," Lawlor noted, "working with international organizations and taking trips abroad are an opportunity to apply theories and practices they are learning in international business courses."

The RIT Project: Penetrating the Myanmar Market

Following their trip to Myanmar, Lawlor and Davis agreed to take on DVB's market share challenge as the core case study project for the next EMBA cohort. The EMBA students will focus on the concept of disruption—a theory developed by Harvard business professor Clayton Christensen and taught in an RIT EMBA business strategy course. Goals for the case study include teaching EMBA students to understand how to approach business problems like those DVB face.



"It's always gratifying to see one of our EMBA graduates make a real impact—and all the more so in this instance where we can involve current students in the success of a worthwhile social and business initiative."

Marty Lawlor
Director of Executive MBA Programs
Saunders College of Business

"To enter and gain a foothold in the commercial market, DVB is not competing directly with larger incumbents, but rather they are targeting low-end segments of the advertising market, with a low-cost business model and more convenient products," Hajecki said. DVB also is targeting companies—both small and large—that have never advertised on television or online.

The aim of the case study project is to present complete findings at DVB's 25th anniversary celebration in Yangon, Myanmar in 2017 and pursue a long-term relationship between the RIT EMBA program and DVB.

Executive Education Cohorts Present Distinctive Opportunities

"The RIT Executive MBA program has had a huge impact on my career," Hajecki said. "The program has given me invaluable perspectives, tools and business skills to approach a variety of management-related, analytical and strategic situations throughout our organization."

He added that RIT offers a different style of learning, which lead to a more inclusive and informative educational experience. "The cohort model gave everyone a chance to work on student project teams with experienced executives from a variety of industries. MDs and HR managers, IT directors, marketing VPs—all grouped on teams," he said. "I think RIT does a great job of attracting students from a variety of industries."

saunders.rit.edu/emba

Additional reporting by Kerry Feltner,
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For Enterprising Students and
Creative Enterprises



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