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## The Huntsman Post, April 2013

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JON M.  
**HUNTSMAN**  
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS  
Utah State University

# THE HUNTSMAN POST

APRIL 2013 ISSUE

## HUNTSMAN STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

### Two USU Graduates, Jill Aoki and Anthony Lemon, Win "Sells Awards" for Top CPA Exam Scores



Jill Aoki & Anthony Lemon: Elijah Watt Sells Award...

Just 39 people out of more than 92,000 candidates who took the Uniform CPA Examination in 2012 scored above 95.5 on all four sections, and two of those high scorers were graduates of the Jon M. Huntsman School of Business at Utah State University.

The American Inst...

[Read More](#)

## SHORT TAKES

Six-Week Entrepreneurship Minor Offered Summer 2013

Huntsman Student Chosen to Job-Shadow U.S. Chairman of PricewaterhouseCoopers

## HUNTSMAN SCHOOL IN THE NEWS

*Herald Journal* Story About Charlie Denson Speaking at Commencement

*Boston Globe* and 160 Other Publications Pick Up News About MIS Victories

*Herald Journal* Story About Suzanne Pierce-Moore Visit

*Utah Statesman* Story About Huntsman Prof. Dan Holland

*Utah Statesman* Story About Flash Marketing Group

## HUNTSMAN BLOG NEWS

Continuous Process Improvement is a Way of Life

## SERVICE

### Accounting Club, Beta Alpha Psi, Wins Two First-Place Prizes at Deloitte Competition



Bonnie Villarreal, Jenalyn Meldrum, and Jesse Ham...

Huntsman students and officers of the accounting club Beta Alpha Psi recently traveled to Denver, Colo., for a Deloitte Best Practices competition and took first place in two out of three categories. They competed against teams from Brigham Young University, the University...

[Read More](#)

## ENTREPRENEURSHIP

# Club Puts Entrepreneurship Students to the Test, Challenging Them To Open a Lemonade Stand



Bryce Smalley pitches a business idea to a panel...

Every year children across the country mix up their best brew, hand-letter signs, and test their parents' support levels by opening makeshift lemonade stands. During Entrepreneurship-Week, USU students, armed with a grownup understanding of marketing, were given a chance to...

[Read More](#)

## GLOBAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES

# More Than 100 Students Travel on Seven Faculty-Led Global Learning Experiences



Vijay Kannan says students visited six countries...

What do the Brazilian aircraft maker Embraer, Nike, the Reserve Bank of India (India's 'Fed'), and Toyota have in common?

They are all organizations visited by Huntsman School students over spring break 2013. Last month, an unprecedented one hundred and two Hunts...

[Read More](#)

## ENGINE OF ECONOMIC GROWTH

# Logan Named Number One Small U.S. City For Technology and Business




For the second year in a row, Logan was named the best-performing small city in the country for technology and business by the Milken Institute. The award is calling attention to the conditions that have attracted a growing number of international high-tech firms to Cache V...


Branding: The Keep It Simple Stupid (KISS) Method

## HUNTSMAN HALL WEBCAMS

Watch the Progress of Huntsman Hall Live on Our Webcams

## VIDEOS

 Huntsman Professor Ben Blau is USU's 2013 Researcher of the Year

 Historic Lund Hall Work Makes Way for New Huntsman Business Building

 Cydni Tetro Shares Her Entrepreneurial Experiences at Disney

 Founders of Bluehouse Skis Discuss Starting a Company in College

 Charles Sorenson Describes Innovation in the Health Care Industry

## SOCIAL MEDIA



Logan was named best-performing small city for bu...

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Email: [huntsman@usu.edu](mailto:huntsman@usu.edu)

# Huntsman Post

## Alumni Anthony Lemon and Jill Aoki Win Prestigious "Sells Awards" for Top CPA Exam Scores

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By Steve Eaton

Just 39 people out of more than 92,000 candidates who took the Uniform CPA Examination in 2012 scored above 95.5 on all four sections, and two of those high scorers were graduates of the Jon M. Huntsman School of Business at Utah State University.

The American Institute of Certified Public Accountants just released the names of those who will be receiving the prestigious Elijah Watt Sells Award, given only to people who average above 95.5 on the four tests all must take to become certified public accountants. Jill Aoki and Anthony Lemon, who graduated with master's degrees in accounting from USU in 2012, were on that list. It's a unique accomplishment that school officials say has never been matched by an accounting graduating class at USU.

Graduates from University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), University of Wisconsin, Texas A&M, Bentley University, Boston College, Georgetown University, and Brigham Young University were among those who earned the prestigious award.

Larry Walther, the department head for the School of Accountancy, said it is extremely unusual for a school the size of the Huntsman School of Business to have two students win the Sells Award.

"I think it says something about us either being really lucky or, at least having the right curriculum in place," he said. "I hope it says we have the right curriculum in place and the right kind of students."

Scott Nixon, who is a partner at PricewaterhouseCoopers where Lemon now works, doesn't seem to think there's any luck involved.

"This is unheard of really," he said. "It happens so rarely in the state of Utah to any of the universities. It's wonderful that USU has two winners. That just says a whole lot about the program at Utah State."

Mr. Nixon said when he first met Mr. Lemon at a recruiting event he could tell that he was "very special" and that they would want him on the PricewaterhouseCoopers team.

"Anthony is a stellar example of the high quality USU graduates who show up in the work force with a ready knowledge of how to work hard and make significant contributions to the teams they work with," he said.

Mr. Lemon said his classes introduced him to the basic concepts he would need to understand for the test, and the good study habits he developed in school helped him prepare for it.

Ms. Aoki, who was the Huntsman valedictorian last year, agreed that the classes she took and professors she worked with helped prepare her for the test. She said Walther and other professors encouraged her to study hard for the exam by expressing confidence in her ability to come out on top as a Sells Award winner.



Jill Aoki and Anthony Lemon are two of 39 individuals who were awarded the prestigious Elijah Watt Sells Award.

Photo By Sterling Morris

"I did use a review course," she said. "Most people do use some sort of review, so I think that was helpful. Also, I made flash cards of pretty much everything. I had these electronic flash cards, and everywhere I was going – even if I was walking across campus - I had my phone out looking through them. If I was just waiting in line at the grocery store, I was going through them."

Tracy Christman is an audit partner at Ernst & Young where Aoki had been offered a job after she completed a summer internship more than a year before graduation. Like Nixon, Christman was involved in the recruiting process and was pleased to see Aoki get top scores.

"I think it is absolutely outstanding," she said. "I know from personal experience that passing the exam is a huge milestone, but to be able to do so in such spectacular fashion...it's just amazing to me."

# Huntsman Post

## Huntsman Club, Beta Alpha Psi, Wins Two First-Prize Awards at Deloitte Best Practices Competition

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By Allie Jeppson

Huntsman students and officers of the accounting club Beta Alpha Psi recently traveled to Denver, Colo., to attend a Deloitte Best Practices competition and took first place in two out of three categories. They competed against teams from Brigham Young University, the University of Utah, the University of Denver, and other schools from six states in the Rocky Mountain Region.

The organization is an international honors society that seeks to bridge the gap between students and accounting professionals. Each year, Beta Alpha Psi (BAP) chapters located at universities nationwide have the opportunity to showcase projects they have completed during the year that help accounting students develop professional skills and serve the community.



Bonnie Villarreal, faculty advisor, (left), Jenalyn Meldrum, vice president, and Jesse Hamilton, president, are Beta Alpha Psi leaders. Photo by Steve Eaton.

This year each club was expected to develop a project or practice in one or more of three areas or categories called "innovation," "imagination," and "inspiration." Each club presented to judges and other chapters at BAP regional meetings across the nation.

USU competed in two of the categories, imagination and innovation, and won first place in both areas which will allow the Huntsman club to compete nationally in Anaheim, Calif., in summer 2013.

"We went out there with good ideas that really were innovative and imaginative, and we were recognized for that," said Bonnie Villarreal, BAP advisor and director of the Master's of Accounting program.

In the category of imagination, chapters were required to help students improve written communication skills in an imaginative way. To meet this challenge, chapter members at USU surveyed students within their chapter to see what written skills they needed the most help with and found that many students struggled with writing cover letters. The club held a workshop that helped students not only to write better cover letters, but also to adapt their cover letters to different companies and job opportunities. Afterward, a competition was held among the participating students to see who could produce the most well-written and adaptive cover letters.

"In accounting, a resume is a filter," Ms. Villarreal said. "Accounting companies don't want resumes to be unique, so we really wanted a way to help our students develop their own personal brand through their cover letter."

The innovation project involved developing soft skills that were not recruitment related. To help students learn to present technical knowledge to a non-technical audience, members of BAP held a workshop over two evenings to help local Boy Scouts earn a personal management merit badge. More than 90 Boy Scouts attended.

USU's chapter was successful, in part, because the students found creative ways to present their material, said Ms. Villarreal. For example, one presenter removed his suit jacket to reveal a Boy Scout uniform, and two of the presenters gave parts of their presentations in Romanian and Chinese to demonstrate how difficult it can be to understand a presentation that is not in your native language. Accounting is commonly referred to as the language of

business. The terminology can make it feel like a foreign language to non-accountants. Explaining money management at the Boy Scout level helped accounting students practice overcoming the language barrier while introducing the scouts to possible careers in the financial profession.

"It wowed the judges because it wasn't the same boring thing that they usually see," she said.



# Huntsman Post

## Entrepreneurship Club Draws Students From Across Campus to Entrepreneurship Week Events

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By Allie Jeppson and Steve Eaton

Every year children across the country mix up their best brew, hand-letter signs, and test their parents' support levels by opening makeshift lemonade stands. During Entrepreneurship Week, USU students, armed with a grownup understanding of marketing, were given a chance to show off how they would make such a basic sales venture successful.

They only had three hours to see how much cash they could earn selling lemonade concoctions of their own creation and at their own prices. Blue lemonade, lemonade mixed with energy drinks, lemonade floats, and even Chik-fil-A's signature lemonade were all featured at stands around campus.

The winning team called "Aggieaide" decided that in addition to creating a focused marketing campaign, it would tap into what makes successful lemonade stands thrive everywhere - cute kids. The team drafted children to work their booth, and it was the little entrepreneurs who were asking people if they wanted to buy a lemonade at \$1 a pop. They also offered to have someone on rollerblades deliver the lemonade to those wanting the service, and rumor had it that rolling beverage servers would sing for a tip as part of the delivery package. With the combination of the tried and true, and the new and innovative, they made \$244.75.

Brittney Garbrick, a member of the winning team, and an MBA-MSHR student, said that running a lemonade stand is really no different than running any sort of business.

"It's very simplified," she said, "but you have to advertise, and you have to have good product, and you have to get people to come, and basically pay for something they don't need."

The lemonade event was one of several activities the Entrepreneurship Club included in Entrepreneurship Week, all aimed at encouraging students to look for innovative solutions and develop new business ideas.



Bryce Smalley pitches an idea for a "quick connect coupler" to a panel of judges during Entrepreneurship Week.



Tyler Nielson, right, holds hands with young entrepreneur London Wilkey who helped his team sell

Kyle Ivins, president of the Entrepreneurship Club, said that this year they wanted to promote the type of entrepreneurial spirit that the E-club wants to encourage on campus. Kyle said a recent census revealed that within the Huntsman School alone there are some 80 students who own their own businesses.

"We also had a big push this year to include more students from outside the School of Business," Kyle said. "We find that there are a lot of entrepreneurs outside the Huntsman School."

lots of lemonade. Photo by Allie Jeppson

Spike Cheever, director of competitions,  
said that there were 22 people who

entered the elevator pitch competition this year, up from 12 last year. They presented their plans to a panel of judges, all drafted from the Founders Board for the Center for Entrepreneurial Excellence. The Founders Board is a group of Huntsman alumni and friends who volunteer time and support to USU efforts that help students with their entrepreneurial ideas.

"They all said that this year's ideas were the strongest they have seen yet," Kyle said of the elevator pitch competition. "Usually, in years past, there have been three or four really strong ideas, and this year there were more than 10 strong ideas."

The judging of the elevator pitch contest ended in a tie, so the prize money was evenly split between the two winners. Bryan LaBar came up with the idea of a foot sleeve that could be extended from sweat pants to cover toes and keep them warm. Matt Seely and Bryce Smalley pitched an idea for a product that is the foundation of their start-up company. It is a device that connects two fluid-transferring hoses called a quick-connect coupler. They claim their new patented design outperforms existing couplers in functionality and performance and can be manufactured at 1/10 the cost of their competitors' products. Matt and Bryce won \$2,500, and so did Bryan.

Justin Graham with Delta Designs created a gas camping stove that is 90 percent smaller than a Coleman 2 burner but can perform just as efficiently. He took third place and won \$1,000.

Some 30 teams entered the 72-hour competition, up by 10 from 2012, in a contest that challenged students to identify something that "bugged them" and propose a solution to it on video.

The first-place team in the 72-hour competition, led by Chris Chamberlain, came up with an idea to create an app that will allow movie theaters to open their seats for a bidding style approach (similar to Priceline.com) so each seat could be filled if the theater is not completely full. They earned \$1,000 for their idea and video.

The second-place team, led by Spencer Finch, was awarded \$600 in prize money. Their idea was to create an application that would allow a consumer to view all of the daily or weekly deals for shopping around town and locate the nearest store that price matches and contains all of the items the consumer wants. This way a shopper would only have to go to one place to get the best prices.

# Huntsman Post

## More Than 100 Students Travel to Six Countries on Global Learning Experiences in Spring 2013

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By Vijay R. Kannan, executive director of International Programs

What do the Brazilian aircraft maker Embraer, Nike, the Reserve Bank of India (India's 'Fed'), and Toyota have in common?

They are all organizations visited by Huntsman School students over spring break 2013. Last month, an unprecedented one hundred and two Huntsman School students participated in a record seven faculty-led Global Learning Experiences (GLEs) in six countries on three continents. Six of the GLEs were components of graduate programs in business administration and human resource management, while the seventh was created to provide an opportunity for those who simply wanted to gain meaningful professional and cultural experience.

Each program included between eight and ten professional engagements at both private sector organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs.) The visits and discussions gave students the opportunity to learn about the unique characteristics of different national environments, and how these shape business, economic, and social activity. For example, students in China learned about the impact that increasing labor and real estate rates and a shortage of senior management talent are having on the Chinese economy, as well as on China's attractiveness as a manufacturing location. In South Africa, students saw first-hand how organizations and their leadership continue to be impacted by the legacy of the apartheid era. In India, students discovered that despite the country's recent economic rise, the government and the power of democracy are viewed by some as an obstacle to continued economic growth.



Vijay R. Kannan, executive director of International Programs, said that students visited six countries in Spring 2013.

Photo by: Russ Dixon

In each program the students' experiences were integrated into a broader academic framework. Today, the Huntsman School packages all of its GLEs with coursework that is designed to provide students with the contextual knowledge needed to process in-country learning. In addition, students complete assignments that tie the various components of their global learning together, so that its impact lasts well beyond their return home.

Five years ago, a Huntsman School student's spring break academic experience might have meant doing homework in Logan, Price, or Ephraim. Today it can mean immersion in the realities of business in London, Tokyo, Shanghai, or Sao Paulo.

# Huntsman Post

## Logan Ranked Number One Small U.S. City for Technology and Business

By Steve Eaton

For the second year in a row, Logan was named as the best-performing small city in the country by the nonprofit Milken Institute. The prize is calling attention to the growing number of international high-tech firms attracted to Logan and Cache Valley.

The Milken Institute is a nonprofit, nonpartisan think tank. Its annual survey compared 179 small cities before giving Logan its number one ranking, crediting the city with having a “thriving technology sector.” The study evaluates job growth, wages, salaries, and technology output to come up with the rankings.

“This year, better performance in short-term technology output and wage increases drove the results—it was employment growth in 2011,” the report says of Logan. “Due to the stable state budget, Utah State University, Logan’s primary employer, saw its finances improve and continued to expand its research capacity.”

In addition to the Milken Institute’s ranking, CQ Press, a publisher of reference books, ranked Logan, Utah, as the safest metropolitan area in the United States in 2012. And Cache County is the second healthiest county in Utah, according to County Health Rankings and Roadmaps.



Logan and Cache Valley are attracting more high-tech and international firms.

Those tasked with fueling the right kinds of economic development in northern Utah said that Cache Valley offers benefits to those who would move or expand their businesses here.

Sandy Emile, CEO and president of The Cache Chamber of Commerce, said all of Cache Valley has access to high speed internet, state and county roads, and that’s all they may need to set up shop in Cache County. Studies have shown people are now choosing where they would like to live first and then looking for a job there or a place to open a business, she said.

“Cache Valley immediately moves way up the totem pole based on what it offers,” Ms. Emile said. “We have healthy lifestyles, excellent outdoor recreation, and high family values, which gives us a strong family environment.”

She said many people don’t realize the number of world-class high-tech firms that are in Cache Valley already, such as Ophir-Spiricon, Campbell Scientific, Inovar, and Apogee Instruments.

Brian Carver, community and economic development director for the Bear River Association of Governments, said in addition to encouraging new business to locate in Cache, Box Elder, and Rich counties, his organization tries to help businesses that are already here to expand and grow.

“We’ve got great assets here,” he said. “The university gives us a highly educated, highly skilled work force. One of the things that people from out of state are always telling us is that our employee base is not only a little more highly educated than average, but they have a good work ethic, too.”

Kirk Jensen, economic development director for Logan, said the business school’s connection to Jon Huntsman and the work it did with the late Stephen R. Covey, the Jon M. Huntsman Presidential Chair in Leadership, has raised its profile.

Utah State University is “really part of the definition of who we are and what this valley is,” he said. “Were it not for Utah State, this community would look much different today than it does.”

Mike Young, assistant director of Logan’s Small Business Development Center, ’08, finance and economics, ’10, master’s degree, said that there is a life-balance benefit in the valley due, in part, to shorter commute times than those of some who work in larger cities.

“Even though the valley is growing, it still has a small feel to it, and that’s very attractive to many people,” he said.