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USU Jon M. Huntsman School of Business, "Huntsman Professor John Johnson Teaches at Wharton" (2013). *Jon M. Huntsman School of Business News Collection*. 138.

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Huntsman Professor John Johnson Teaches at Wharton

By Allie Jeppson



Huntsman Professor John Johnson can now start a sentence by saying, “When I taught at Wharton... .”

That’s because he was invited to speak to students at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania twice within the last six months.

In the last year, three professors from the Wharton School have come to speak to Huntsman students. One of them, David Bell, took a special interest in the company Politicl, a firm founded by current and former Huntsman students and Dr. Johnson.

Dr. Bell, Wharton’s Xinmei Zhang and Yongge Dai Professor, invited Dr. Johnson to come and talk about Politicl. The company uses a web-based neural-network technology that evaluates the online buzz about political candidates and has been used to predict election outcomes.

“Mr. Bell was intrigued with what we did, so he and I started communicating a lot,” Dr. Johnson said. “After a while I got an email from him asking me if I’d be interested in coming to talk to his students about Politicl and the intersection of big data and politics.”

Dr. Johnson said he gladly accepted the invitation and first visited Wharton’s new full-time MBA program, located in San Francisco, in November 2012. After a successful visit, Dr. Bell asked Dr. Johnson to talk to his students again in January, this time in Philadelphia.

“It was cool to learn that we have students who are just as smart as students at Wharton,” he said. “This example can show Huntsman students that we are doing things that are so impressive that professors at Wharton want their students to see it.”