



April 5<sup>th</sup> 2024

# THE WOMEN'S COLLECTIVE

An in-person forum to End the Gap



**Leeds** School of Business  
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER



**April 5<sup>th</sup> 2024**

# **The Women's Collective**

**An in-person forum to End the Gap**

**Friday, April 5, 2024**  
**9:00am – 3:00pm**

**A special experience for admitted  
MS and MBA students**

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End the Gap is a comprehensive strategy to expand the reach of the Leeds School of Business to more women. Through these efforts, Leeds is working to reach gender parity and maintain a diverse student body into the future. With the introduction of Graduate Programs Women's Collective Forum to End the Gap, Leeds seeks to empower women admitted to our graduate programs to find a home at Leeds from which to anchor their professional success and expose them to the unique assets and opportunities that are part of CU Boulder's environment.

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9:00 – 9:15 am

CHECK IN & CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST

Room  
352

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**WELCOME**

9:15 – 9:20 am

- Anne Dupont, Chair Emeritus, World Pulse | Retired Senior Partner, Accenture | Leeds Advisory Board Member
- Kristi Ryujiin, Associate Dean for Graduate Programs and Special Assistant to the Dean for Faculty Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Room  
352

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9:20 – 9:40 am

**LEEDS FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: Finding Your Pack**

- Christina Lacerenza, Ph.D., Assistant Professor – Organizational Behavior, Leeds School of Business

Room  
352

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**PANEL DISCUSSION: What Makes Leeds Graduate Programs & Boulder Special**

Facilitator: Anne Dupont, Retired Senior Partner – Accenture, Board Chair Emeritus -World Pulse & Leeds Advisory Board Member

Leeds Alumnae and Student Panelists:

9:40 – 10:40 am

- Kersti Kammerer – Supply Chain Data Science Analyst – Arrow Electronics
  - Leeds MS Business Analytics '23
- Amy Gillespie – Strategy and Operations Manager – NetApp
  - Leeds Full Time MBA '22
- Mary Boling - VP of Curricular Affairs | President of Community Partnerships for Net Impact Club
  - Leeds Full Time MBA Candidate '24
- Elyzet Gauthier
  - Leeds MS Supply Chain Candidate '24

Room  
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10:40 – 11:00 am    **NETWORKING COFFEE BREAK**

Room 352

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**INTERACTIVE SESSION: Executive Presence**

11:00 – 11:30 am

- [Jennifer Bone, Ph.D.](#), Associate Teaching Professor – Professional Effectiveness, Leeds School of Business

Room 352

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**INDUSTRY PARTNER PANEL**

Facilitator: [Linda Peotter](#), Former CEO and President, Metal Trading Corporation, Leeds Advisory Board Guests

Panelists:

11:30 am – 12:15 pm

- [Christine Dahm](#), Operating Partner and CMO – Harbinger Ventures, LLC
- [Marie-Claude Depew](#), Managing Director – Deloitte Consulting LLP
- [Stacey Osborn](#), President – Champion Pet Foods
- [Patrina Pettry](#), Director of Learning and Development, Consumer and Business Banking - Wells Fargo
- [Sarah Vlasic](#), Vice President of Business Analytics – Crocs

Room 352



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## NETWORKING LUNCH WITH BOARD, INDUSTRY PARTNERS, AND KEY FACULTY

12:15 – 1:15 pm

- [Christine Dahm](#), Operating Partner and CMO – Harbinger Ventures, LLC
- [Anne Dupont](#), Retired Senior Partner – Accenture, Board Chair Emeritus -World Pulse and Leeds Advisory Board Member
- [Marie-Claude Depew](#), Managing Director - Deloitte Consulting LLP
- [Jane Miller](#), CEO – Rudi's Organic Bakery; Former CEO - Lily's Sweets & Leeds Advisory Board Member
- [Stacey Osborn](#), President – Champion Pet Foods
- [Linda Peotter](#), Former CEO and President – Metal Trading Corp., Chairperson of the Board – Colorado Succeeds
- [Patrina Pettry](#), Director of Learning and Development, Consumer and Business Banking - Wells Fargo
- [Sarah Vlastic](#), Vice President of Business Analytics – Crocs

Room 352

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## TED TALK Q&A: Leadership: Learning to Win without a Playbook

1:15 – 2:00 pm

[Jane Miller](#), CEO – Rudi's Organic Bakery; Former CEO - Lily's Sweets & Leeds Advisory Board Member

Room 352





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## FACULTY SESSION: Hot Topics

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|----------------|--|----------|
| 2:00 – 3:00 pm | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>Nathalie Moyen Ph.D.</u>, Professor and Chair – Finance<br/>“Finance Research at Leeds”</li></ul>                                   | Room 352 |
|                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>Heather Kennedy</u>, Teaching Associate Professor – Marketing<br/>“What Makes the Natural &amp; Organics Industry Unique”</li></ul> |          |
|                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>Sarah Zechman Ph.D.</u>, Professor – Accounting, Tisone Memorial Fellow<br/>“Run EDGAR Run”</li></ul>                               |          |

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## CLOSING

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|----------------|--|----------|
| 3:00 – 3:05 pm | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>Kristi Ryujin</u>, Associate Dean for Graduate Programs and Special Assistant to the Dean for Faculty Diversity, Equity and Inclusion</li></ul> | Room 352 |
|----------------|--|----------|
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# PARTICIPANT BIOGRAPHIES



**Anne Dupont - Chair Emeritus, World Pulse | Retired Senior Partner, Accenture | Leeds Advisory Board Member**

Anne is a retired consultant, having spent many years with Accenture; in her latter years as a senior partner, specializing in large scale workforce transformation, and later at The Athena Group as a principal focused on executive coaching, corporate culture change and leadership development.

In addition to her MBA in Finance from what is now the Leeds School of Business, Anne also holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Arizona, Eller College of Management.

Anne serves on the Leeds Advisory Board; most recently she served on the Dean Search Committee as one of two Advisory Board members, which culminated in the hiring of our new Dean, Dr. Vijay Khatri. Anne has a passion for elevating women and helping them find their voice in the working world. Anne is in her fourth year of facilitating a Leadership Circle for 2<sup>nd</sup> year MBA women, a mentoring process and trusted circle of women who discuss the challenges and opportunities of growing their leadership. She also works with the Graduate program on hosting the Women's Collective Forum each year to recruit talented women to the program and give them a sample of the leading-edge opportunities that Leeds can provide them. She is the Chair Emeritus and serves on the Board of an international women's organization, World Pulse, that is focused on accelerating the timeframe to close the gender equity gap and provides a technology platform to connect tens of thousands of women worldwide to share their stories, resources and enact change initiatives in 200+ countries and territories.

Anne has two daughters and associated son in laws and two granddaughters, with a 3<sup>rd</sup> on the way who all live in Northern Colorado, where Anne currently resides.



**Kristi Ryujin - Associate Dean for Graduate Programs  
Special Assistant to the Dean for Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion  
Leeds School of Business, University of Colorado**

As the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs, Kristi is responsible for the advancement, quality, vibrancy and continuation of graduate programs at the Leeds School of Business, with oversight of recruitment, retention, graduation, and placement of nearly 500 graduate students, annually. Prior to joining Graduate Programs, Kristi served in the Office of Diversity Affairs as the Assistant Dean for Diversity and Inclusion and Director of the Office of Diversity Affairs. In these roles, Kristi created programs to support underrepresented students including the Diverse Scholar's Research Initiative and the Diversity and Business Ethics Case Competition. Kristi has also instituted academic tutoring, academic boot camps, implemented a faculty-led mentoring program for Diverse Scholars Program students and increased corporate engagement. In 2017 Kristi created End the Gap gender-equity programs to support the school-wide initiative to increase diversity and gender parity. In addition to these student-focused efforts, Kristi has been instrumental in increasing faculty diversity by working with



# PARTICIPANT BIOGRAPHIES

division chairs and search committees, creating the dual career hiring program, and supporting similar efforts at central campus.

In 2020 the YWCA in Boulder County honored Kristi with the Community Impact Maker Award. The award recognizes a community leader committed to creating a “more equitable, inclusive and empowering place for all who live in Boulder County.”

Prior to joining Leeds, Kristi served as the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Diversity Initiatives at the University of Missouri – Kansas City. At UMKC, she created and implemented speaker programs that brought diverse speakers and perspectives to the campus and provided diversity training for UMKC offices and departments. She also developed fundraising programs for UMKC Pride Empowerment Scholarships and in spring 2009, she received the prestigious Outstanding Staff Award from the LGBT office at UMKC for her work to support Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender students, staff and faculty. In 2013, Kristi received the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce Ace Award for her work in diversity. Kristi holds an M.Ed. in Education, Culture and Society from the University of Utah.



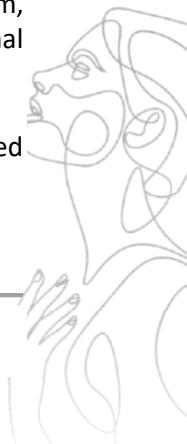
**Christina Lacerenza, Ph.D. – Assistant Professor, Organizational Leadership and Information Analytics | Leeds School of Business, University of Colorado**

Dr. Lacerenza is an assistant professor in the Organizational Leadership and Information Analytics division at the Leeds School of Business at University of Colorado Boulder. With her work, she aims to improve organizational leadership, with an emphasis on increasing positive leadership practices, mitigating power abuse, and understanding the team within which the leader is embedded. To accomplish this goal, Dr. Lacerenza examines the growth and development of leaders and right-hand partners, as well as the intricacies at play within the teams that managers lead. She conducts both quantitative and qualitative work, aligning the methodology used with the focus of the research question(s). Her

research has been published in *Academy of Management Journal*, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, and other high-quality outlets.

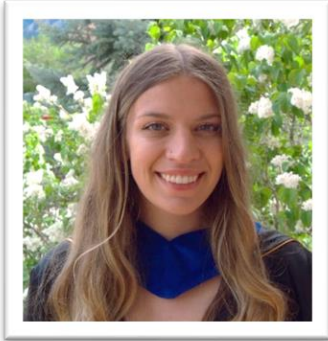
At Leeds, Dr. Lacerenza teaches Foundations of Teamwork and Collaboration in the full-time MBA program, Organizational Development and Leadership to undergraduates in business and engineering, and Organizational Theory in the doctoral program.

Prior to joining Leeds, Lacerenza earned her PhD from Rice University. Prior to her academic career, she worked in talent management at Amazon and for the Orlando Magic NBA Team.





# PARTICIPANT BIOGRAPHIES



**Kerstin Kammerer – Supply Chain Data Science Analyst – Arrow Electronics | MS Business Analytics Class of 2023, Leeds School of Business, University of Colorado**

Kersti is from Denver, Colorado and graduated from CU Boulder in the Fall of 2021 with a bachelor's degree in Psychology with minors in Business Analytics and Entrepreneurship/Innovation.

She completed her master's degree in Business Analytics in May 2023. She currently works at Arrow Electronics as a Supply Chain Data Science Analyst on the company's data science team. In Kersti's free time, she loves to ski, hike, and spend time outdoors.



**Amy Gillespie – Senior Sponsorship Manager – NetApp | MBA Class of 2022, Leeds School of Business, University of Colorado**

Born in Los Angeles, raised in Columbus, Ohio, and landing in Boulder Colorado, Amy Gillespie is proud to have received her MBA from CU Boulder. She began her career in marketing, advertising, and analytics working with creative agencies and Fortune 100 companies managing and developing multi-million dollar advertising campaigns. In 2016, she left her corporate marketing role at Nationwide Insurance and founded The Campfire Experience thereby introducing the Midwest to the concept of glamping. After an exit in January of 2020, and with the onset of the Covid-19 Pandemic, she realized she always wanted to get her MBA and determined that this might be the best time to

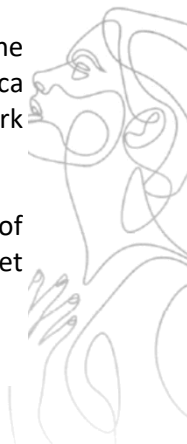
take a pause on her career and invest in herself. Directly because of her MBA experience and summer internship program she received an offer for her current role in Marketing Strategy & Operations for NetApp upon graduation in May 2022.



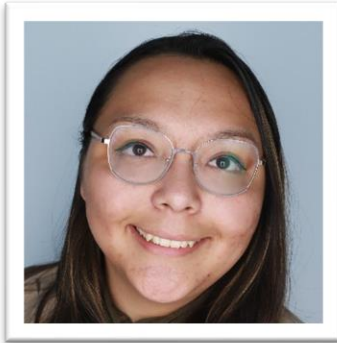
**Mary Boling - MBA Candidate at Leeds School of Business | Clean Energy Pathway | University of Colorado**

Mary is a second year, full-time MBA student at Leeds. Prior to starting the MBA program, she worked in public education- first as a Teach for America Corps Member and then as the Director of Student Recruitment for a network of public charter schools.

Currently, she is part of the Clean Energy Pathway at Leeds, the MBAA VP of Curricular Affairs, and the President of Community Partnerships for the Net Impact Club.



# PARTICIPANT BIOGRAPHIES



**Elyzet Marie Gauthier – MS in Supply Chain Candidate at Leeds School of Business | University of Colorado**

Elyzet is an aspiring Supply Chain Operations student currently pursuing a Master's Degree in Supply Chain Operations at The University of Colorado Boulder. Passionate about Procurement and Logistics, Elyzet is dedicated to learning and exploring the intricacies of Supply Chain Operations.

Throughout the program, Elyzet has demonstrated a strong commitment to academic excellence and personal growth and has received an award from Beta Gamma Sigma.

With a keen interest in Procurement, Elyzet is excited to participate in the upcoming Women's Collective Panel. They look forward to engaging in insightful discussions and gaining new perspectives from fellow panelists and audience members alike.

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**Jennifer Bone, Ph.D. – Associate Professor, Professional Effectiveness | Leeds School of Business, University of Colorado**

Jennifer is an associate teaching professor at the Leeds School of Business. She holds a Ph.D. from the University of Colorado at Boulder (2007), an M.A. from Colorado State University (2000), and a B.A. from Cornell University (1997).

Jennifer teaches undergraduate and graduate-level business communication courses, covering topics such as communicating across differences, emotional intelligence and leadership, and negotiation. Additionally, she conducts workshops for industry leaders on conflict management, executive presence, and presentational speaking. Her practical approach to teaching and delivering

workshops aims to equip people with essential communication and leadership skills to enhance their business results.

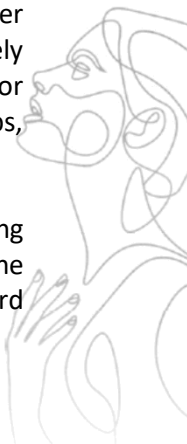
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**Linda Peotter – Former President of Metal Trading Corporation**

Linda has been an Entrepreneur, and community leader in the Denver area for over 30 years. She is the former President of Metal Trading Corporation, a privately held non-ferrous metal brokerage firm, which she co-founded in 1995. Prior experience includes positions at Golden Aluminum, a Coors business, N.V. Philips, and AT&T.

Philanthropic pursuits include serving on the board of directors at Nurturing Newborns, Colorado Succeeds, and mentoring Denver Non-profit leaders. She also runs a mentoring circle for women CU MBA students. Linda is a former board member at the Leeds School of Business, Social Venture



# PARTICIPANT BIOGRAPHIES

Partners. the Alzheimer Association and Ace Scholarships. Linda holds a B.S. in Business Administration from the University of Illinois, Urbana/Champaign.

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## **Christine Dahm - Senior CPG Executive & Advisor**

Christine is a Senior Marketing Executive with over 30 years' experience in both start-up and large multi-national consumer packaged goods companies. Her growth strategies have effectively scaled 2 founder-led businesses to successful exits and delivered over 30 innovations, including 3 industry-recognized \$100MM+ launches. She is a non-traditional brand builder with deep experience in grassroots, social & digital media and influencer marketing.

Christine is currently serving as a Board Director for emerging consumer brands Jack & Annie's, Nona Lim, Formula FIG and the Executive Board Chair for Miss Jones Baking Company. She is also an Operating Advisor for Harbinger Ventures, an early-stage venture firm recognized by Fast Company as one of the Most Innovative Companies 2021.

Christine's most recent operating role was the head of Marketing for Noosa yoghurt. The commercial and innovation plans she developed for Noosa made it the fastest growing yoghurt brand in the U.S., leading to the sale of the company in November 2018. She was recognized by Google, Facebook and IRI for outstanding digital and social media results.

Christine's large company experience includes leadership positions in Marketing, Strategy and Innovation with Nestlé, where she was responsible for leading the teams across all prepared food brands including STOUFFER'S®, LEAN CUISINE®, the HOT POCKETS® and LEAN POCKETS® brands, and BUITONI®.

Prior to her work in prepared foods at Nestlé, Christine worked at POWERBAR® and Helene Curtis, where she worked on the creation and successful implementation of growth strategies that led to both companies' acquisition by large multi-national companies (Nestlé and Unilever).

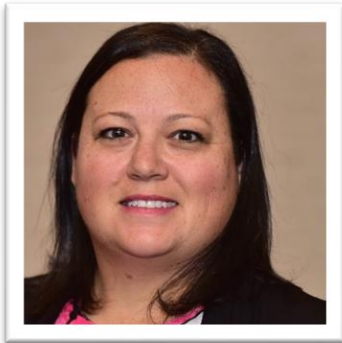
Christine obtained a BA in Finance from the University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign and holds an MBA from the J.L. Kellogg School of Management.

Christine is currently spending time with her family, practicing yoga and helping emerging business leaders and founders succeed.

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# PARTICIPANT BIOGRAPHIES



**Marie-Claude Depew - Managing Director, Deloitte Consulting LLP**

M-C. is a leader in business transformation for national and global customers in the Aerospace & Defense and Construction & Engineering industries. She brings 30+ years of consulting experience focused on ERP transformation and is recognized for her strong project and people management which helps maximum her customer's ROI.

M-C. is known for building and mentoring diverse teams and is passionate for the advancement of women and underrepresented minorities on her engagements and the firm.



**Stacey Osborn – President, Champion Petfoods**

Stacey is currently the President of Champion Petfoods, maker of ORIJEN and ACANA dog and cat food, headquartered in Boulder, Colorado. Champion was acquired by Mars, Inc. in 2023, where Stacey had been working for the past 14 years, first with their Banfield Pet Hospital business as the VP of Marketing and then with Royal Canin in the US as the CMO and for the past 6 years in Asia in Marketing and General Management positions. Before joining Mars, Stacey held roles with well-known companies including Adidas, Macy's, and Arthur Andersen.

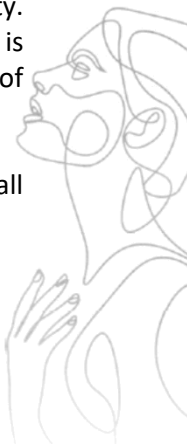
Stacey holds an MBA degree from the Wharton School and an undergraduate degree in Economics from the University of California, Berkeley.



**Patrina Pettry - Director of Learning and Development, Consumer and Business Banking, Wells Fargo | Leeds Advisory Board**

Patrina is the new Director of Learning and Development - Consumer and Business Banking at Wells Fargo. She is passionate about development, coaching, employee engagement, innovation, and the importance of diversity. Patrina imparts the importance of ethical sales practices and doing what is right while powering human potential and using digital tools as a way of creating success in the banking industry.

Patrina has a background rooted in leadership and has 25 years of overall experience in Finance and Learning. Developing others has always been at



# PARTICIPANT BIOGRAPHIES

the forefront of her work. Previous to her new role, Patrina worked at U.S. Bank and was a Regional Executive Leadership Consultant at her self-owned consulting firm. Before that, she spent almost 12 years at JPMorgan Chase where she started off as a Branch Manager and developed into a Market Executive and left as a National Sales Manager.

Patrina received both her Bachelor and Master's degrees in Business Administration and Management from Ohio Christian University. Patrina holds adoption near and dear to her heart and has served as the Adoption Summit Director at The Place, Kentucky.



## **Sarah Vlasic – Vice President of Business Analytics - Crocs**

Sarah is the Vice President of Business Analytics at Crocs where she is transforming the organization to become data-driven. Prior to this role, she worked at Zapos.com for over 12 years, culminating in her role as Senior Director of Business Operations, overseeing a team of over a hundred people, including product managers, business analysts, inventory managers, pricing analysts, and various teams who support the product setup operations. Sarah completed a B.S. from John Carroll University with a concentration in Marketing and Business Logistics and an M.B.A. from the University of Nevada Las Vegas with a concentration in New Venture Management.



## **Jane Miller – CEO and Founder, Jane Knows | CEO, Lily's Sweets | Leeds Advisory Board Member**

Jane has 35+-years of executive experience in the food industry. She has worked with both start-ups and Fortune 500 companies. She is also the founder of Janeknows.com, a career advice website geared towards young leaders starting their careers. Jane is the author of Sleep your Way to the Top (and other myths about business success), a sassy business book targeted at Millennials.

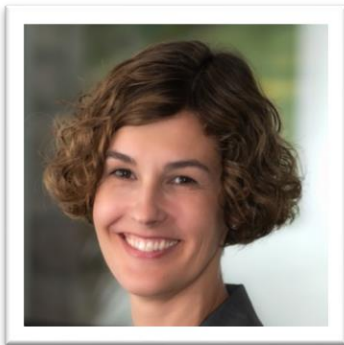
Jane is currently the CEO of Lily's Sweets and has held several other CEO roles in the natural and organic industry, including Rudi's Bakery, ProYo High Protein Ice Cream, and HannahMax Cookie Chips.

Over the course of her career Jane was part of an executive team that brought Hostess out of bankruptcy, worked for HJ Heinz as the Chief Growth Officer and then the President of the UK & Ireland Division. She also ran the Western division of Bestfoods Baking. Jane spent the first fourteen years of her career at PepsiCo, where she rose to be the President of the Central division of Frito-Lay.

# PARTICIPANT BIOGRAPHIES

Jane currently serves as a board member at the University of Colorado Leeds Business School, Watson Institute and Eldorado Springs Artesian Water.

Jane has a degree in Russian Studies from Knox College in Galesburg, IL and earned her MBA degree from Southern Methodist University in Dallas, TX.



**Nathalie Moyen, Ph.D. – Professor, Finance | Chair of the Finance Division | Leeds School of Business | University of Colorado**

Nathalie is a professor of finance at the Leeds School of Business and an affiliated faculty at the Department of Applied Mathematics at the University of Colorado at Boulder. She was the Judith C. and William G. Bollinger Visiting Associate Professor at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania in 2007-2008 and a Visiting Scholar at INSEAD in 2013.

Nathalie investigates the financial decisions that corporations make and how these financial decisions can influence economic decisions such as capital investments. Her research has been published in several journals, including the *International Economic Review*, the *Journal of Finance* and the *Journal of Financial Economics*.

Nathalie primarily teaches in the MBA and PhD programs, but during her time at Leeds she has taught courses at the undergraduate level. Her courses have focused on corporate finance and derivative securities.

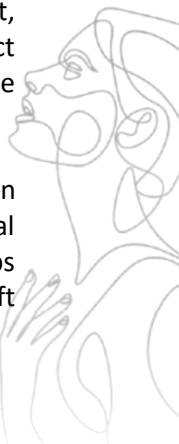


**Heather Kennedy – Associate Professor, Marketing | Leeds School of Business | University of Colorado**

A consumer marketing specialist, Heather has over 20 years of experience in brand strategy, product development and management, and marketing communications.

As a Brand Manager at Kraft Foods, Heather worked on strategy development, advertising, financial management, consumer research and new product commercialization for iconic brands such as DiGiorno Pizza, Taco Bell Home Originals and Kraft Salad Dressing.

At Whole Foods Market, Heather served as the Senior Director of National Marketing where she established an “internal creative agency” that designed and executed all national campaigns. She also developed the annual marketing plan, managed the integration of in-store and digital programs, formed key strategic partnerships with programs like Top Chef and Farm Aid, collaborated with regional marketing teams, and developed the gift card program into a high growth, revenue generator. Her team formalized the Whole Foods Market brand



# PARTICIPANT BIOGRAPHIES

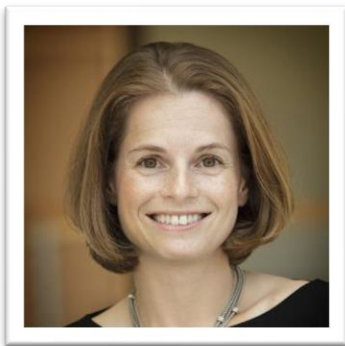
standards and ensured they were clearly communicated and maintained.

During her tenure at Whole Foods Market, Heather also managed the Local Producer Loan Program, working directly with small entrepreneurs to help them grow their business within Whole Foods. She then served as Director of Whole Journeys, an experiential travel concept that enabled consumers to experience the culture of a country through its food.

Most recently, Heather was the lead Brand and Marketing strategist for the Fresh Ideas Group in Boulder, CO, which focuses on natural and organic food and products. She continues to build on her experience by consulting within the industry.

Heather's passion for teaching allows her to share her experience with the wonderful MBA and undergraduate students at Leeds. She teaches Marketing Strategy, Marketing Management, Advertising and Promotions, and New Product Development. She also collaborated closely with the CESR team to establish the [Natural & Organic Pathway](#), the first of its kind in the country, and continues to work with students interested in pursuing a career in the natural products industry.

In 2021, Heather received the MBA Teaching Excellence Award and in 2022 she was the recipient of the CESR Graduate Faculty Award.

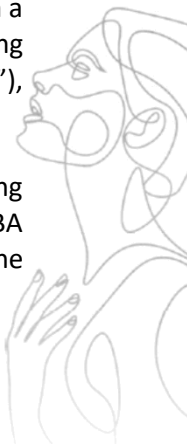


**Sarah Zechman, Ph.D. – Professor, Accounting | Tisone Memorial Fellow | Leeds School of Business | University of Colorado**

Sarah is interested in firm communications, financial reporting choices, and managerial incentives. Before joining the Leeds School in 2015, she taught at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business and the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania.

Zechman is currently an editor at *The Accounting Review* and a member of the editorial boards of the *Journal of Accounting Research* and the *Review of Accounting Studies*. Her research has been cited in various press outlets including the *Wall Street Journal*, *Financial Times*, and *Bloomberg Businessweek*. In 2015 and 2020, she was awarded the Best Paper in financial accounting (for “Executive Overconfidence and the Slippery Slope to Financial Misreporting” and “Run EDGAR Run: SEC dissemination in a high-frequency world,” respectively) and in 2009, she was awarded the Best Dissertation in financial accounting (for “The Relationship between Voluntary Disclosure and Financial Reporting: Evidence from Synthetic Leases”), all from the American Accounting Association.

Prior to earning her PhD, she spent several years at KPMG LLP, where she worked in transaction structuring services and business management processes. She is also a certified public accountant. Zechman earned a BSBA in accounting in 1998 from Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, graduating first in her class. In 2008, she completed a PhD in accounting from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania.



# END THE GAP

As companies strive to achieve greater diversity and gender parity in their ranks, business schools are a natural partner for their hiring needs. Yet business schools across the country struggle to achieve equal gender ratios within their own admissions ranks, with women often comprising less than 40% of a program's enrollment. In an effort to address this challenge, the Leeds School of Business is proud to launch **End the Gap**.

**End the Gap** is a comprehensive recruitment strategy that relies on tailored programming to expand the reach of the Leeds School to more women. Leeds aims to increase application, admission and enrollment numbers for women at the undergraduate and graduate levels. By exposing women to female mentors, role models and business opportunities early, Leeds will empower women to envision themselves as future business students and leaders. Through these efforts, Leeds aspires to reach gender parity and maintain a diverse student body into the future. Achieving this goal will then allow the school to shift focus to even more complex issues, including the wage gap and women in leadership and executive roles.

## Why Women?

Despite lopsided enrollment, women at Leeds prove themselves to be as qualified, if not more so than their male counterparts. Female students academically outperform their male peers at Leeds; they also graduate at higher rates and in less time. The challenge isn't getting women to graduate – it's simply getting them in the door.

Additionally, companies benefit from hiring a more diverse and gender-balanced workforce. Profits increase for businesses with female and minority leadership thanks to a broader diversity of opinion and experience among those making executive decisions.

## Closing the Gap

Under the leadership of the Office of Diversity Affairs, Leeds is creating and growing programming to reach women. Through school- and community-based outreach, summer programs and leadership conferences, Leeds aims to demystify business education, provide strong female role models and increase career readiness so that women graduates are prepared to create, develop and lead the next big idea.

Early results of outreach efforts have been encouraging. Following the 2016 inaugural *Women in Business Leadership Program*, high school-aged participants reported the following:

- 81% of participants said they want to pursue business as a college major
- 88% percent said they would consider applying to Leeds
- 96% agreed that hearing from women leaders increased their confidence in their ability to succeed in business

Of the 32 high school seniors in attendance, 26 applied to Leeds in the 2016-2017 admissions cycle and 22 were accepted. These promising results support the case that simply educating young women about the opportunities in business can help to drive more female applicants to business schools. Outreach at the graduate level is expected to similarly impact enrollment in MBA and MS programs. With increased resources, community outreach and scholarship support, Leeds is confident that the gender gap in our business school can be closed.

