

GTL Baby!

A Guest Editorial by **Victoria Tyler**

Some people are famous for famously doing nothing. Such is the case with the cast of one of America's hottest reality television shows, *Jersey Shore* (see insert below). Their rise to famously doing nothing has even added to the American urban lexicon, via the initials "GTL," which stand for "Gym, Tan & Laundry." To hear these Jersey "Guidos" and "Guidettes" explain it, their day typically consists of waking up and going to the gym to work out (G=Gym), then heading to the tanning bed (T=Tan), and finishing up by doing laundry (L=Laundry). Of course, the nights are reserved for partying.



In so many ways the initials "CoB" could now easily be replaced by the academic version of "GTL." The CoB has fallen so far over the years that one has wonder what it is that CoB faculty do all day. The drop has been so great that even getting the CoB back to where it was in 2007, when Saunders came to USM, would be a monumental task for anyone, Saunders and/or CoB dean Lance Nail, to accomplish. Never mind getting back 10 more years to 1997, the end of former CBA dean Tyrone Black's reign, which was arguably the zenith of USM's b-school.

Of course, it's not difficult to identify the foundations of the CoB's new GTL culture. Its early beginnings included former CoB associate professor of finance John Clark's late lunches (in shorts/flip-flops) with the family, only to arrive at "work" in JGH at mid-afternoon. Even then only casual conversations reportedly occurred. Soon-to-be-former CoB economist Sami Dakhli's unquenchable thirst to spend more time in Europe than "the 'burg" is yet another facet of it, as are his many extra-curricular clubs and such. We know that ECO professor Mark Klinedinst hasn't published an indexed journal article since 1998. Lately we have been learning that Dakhli put the GTL on academic research back in 2006, while his colleague, Akbar Marvasti has been, in GTL

fashion, retreading decade-old research for “EFIB Fridays.” All of this GTL is on former EFIB chair George Carter’s tab.

Of course, the EFIB disciplines don’t have a hold on GTL in the CoB. Accountants have been just as busy not doing much for a number of years. Rod Posey may be *doing a fantastic job at doing his job* in the strained eyes of new ACC director Skip Hughes, but most CoBers know that Posey is doing about as much for his church while in JGH as he is for the CoB’s School of Accountancy. Other accountants, Robert Smith and Charles Jordan, live in Atlanta and Panama City, respectively. How could they be doing more than GTL while living so far from Mississippi? Still, there are other examples throughout MIS, MKT, etc., to perhaps go into at another time.

From reports going around, USM provost Robert Lyman clearly sees the GTL culture that the CoB is fostering. And, unlike USM president Martha Saunders, Lyman is not enamored with USM’s version of a business college. Also unlike Saunders, Lyman has been places that are more respected in academic circles than USM. Clearly there is a gulf between these two executives when it comes to the b-school. Saunders, as president, is presiding, and she is now doing so over moves like the hiring of less than a handful of new accountants to the tune of about \$500K per year. And this form of potential GTL expansion is coming at a time when the university is looking to cut \$20M from its budget. One would think that Lyman will soon have to have a major victory on this front (that is, a victory over CoB GTL) if the greater institution is to remain a viable entity.