

The Top CoB Stories of 2012

By Duane Cobb

Each year at about this time I provide USMNEWS.net *my* top news items involving USM's business school for the year. This is Part 2 in that countdown for the top CoB stories of 2012. Part 1 can be found [here](#).

4. Groundbreaking for the CoB – One of former USM president Martha Saunders' final acts atop USM was to host the groundbreaking ceremony for the CoB's forthcoming facility. The new building, named after CoB benefactor Chuck Scianna of Texas, is to be located on the eastern side of the campus. The college has long been housed in Joseph Greene Hall, the classroom/office space named for the college's first dean. It was the CoB's fifth dean, Lance Nail, who brought the CoB into the 21st century on the facilities front.

3. Peyrefitte Named Interim Dean – At the end of the 2011-12 academic year, the CoB's senior associate dean, Joseph Peyrefitte, rose to the position of interim dean of the organization. It is likely that few CoB faculty or staff would have ever predicted that Peyrefitte would rise to such heights at the time he joined the CoB more than 10 years ago. Peyrefitte, at that time, had unsuccessfully completed a tenure-track run at Mississippi State, and to some his performance as a faculty in the CoB has been adequate, but not stellar. Now he's presiding over processes that affect a sizable number of business faculty.

2. Scianna Backhands IHL Board – It was only a few weeks ago when the two USM campuses hosted "listening sessions" aimed at assisting the Mississippi IHL Board in selecting USM's next president – the one who will succeed Martha Saunders, who "resigned" her office in April of 2012. At one of those particular sessions, CoB benefactor Chuck Scianna took the microphone and proceeded to undress, figuratively speaking, the Mississippi IHL Board for its handling of Saunders' resignation, management of presidential searches, and overall administration of the state's public universities. It was a classic, and in many years this episode would have been ranked at number one. This website's account of that particular episode is worth a read for those who only infrequently visit USMNEWS.net.

1. Lone Star Lance – Lance Nail became the first dean in CoB history to springboard from the Greene Hall dean's office into a much higher profile job when, in May of 2012, he accepted Texas Tech University's invitation to lead the Rawls Business College at the Lubbock-based institution. To get a perspective of the size of this move, Nail's salary jumped by more than \$100,000 at the moment he accepted the post at TTU. There is little doubt that Nail benefitted mightily from having secured AACSB reaffirmation and a multi-million dollar donation from Chuck Scianna over the 12 months or so prior to receiving the TTU offer.