

# Dean's Excellence Fund Opens Doors of Opportunity

Isaiah Evans, a senior majoring in accounting and finance, is a great example of how one small-scale opportunity provided by the Dean's Excellence Fund developed into a much larger one.

The fund supports the college's highest priorities and ensures students receive transformational learning experiences. Evans was one of a select group of Carson College students supported by the fund to attend the 2016 Power Breakfast, an annual networking event for alumni and Seattle business leaders.

Starting with networking opportunities while on the complimentary bus ride from Pullman to Seattle, Evans unknowingly began a journey toward his future career.

"I loved connecting with MBA students enroute to the event," he says. "I was able to make new connections and bounce ideas off them about where I want to go professionally."

## THE POWER OF NETWORKING

Prior networking opportunities at the Carson College Meet the Firms event allowed Evans to meet Sweeney Conrad P.S. representatives Jill Jamison ('14 Accounting) and Carl Sangalang ('14 Accounting), and he was invited to join the company's sponsored table at the Power Breakfast.

"I was inspired by Jill and the other alumni at the table to pursue my goal of becoming a tax accountant for a firm and eventually starting my own firm," Evans says. "In talking to them, I got a good sense of what it is like to be in public accounting."



*Isaiah Evans at the 2016 Power Breakfast.*



*Jack Thompson*

Evans also reintroduced himself to CougsFirst! founder Jack Thompson ('84 Business Administration), partner and vice president at Cherry Creek Mortgage. Thompson and Evans had met previously at a multicultural event at the Compton Union Building on campus, where Evans works as an AV event manager. Thompson advised him to look up Greg Porter, Thompson's former Cougar football teammate. Porter ('82 Accounting, '83 MBA) is the president of Berntson Porter Wealth Management, PLLC, one of the Seattle accounting firms Evans planned to visit after the Power Breakfast.

"Isaiah is an impressive, confident young man and a great testimony to the value of a WSU business degree," says Thompson. "Proactive, engaging young students like him are the reason CougsFirst! is committed to supporting the Carson College and the Cougar Nation."

Evans says talking to Thompson calmed his nerves and gave him the confidence to connect with Porter. After touring Berntson Porter and two other firms, he interviewed with all three once back in Pullman, and received two offers.

"Berntson Porter & Company, PLLC is committed to continuing to build our relationships with colleges in order to attract the best of the best accounting talent. Providing networking and internship opportunities to students is an important segment of our strategy to build a pipeline of highly educated future leaders for our firm and the community," says Porter. "I'm excited to have Isaiah join the BP team and look forward to seeing the contributions he will make while we provide him with some career-shaping experiences and skills."



*Greg Porter and Isaiah.*

"Berntson Porter was the right fit for me. I was offered a three-month internship starting in January, soon after I graduate in December," he says. "Thanks to the Dean's Excellence Fund and the opportunity to attend the Power Breakfast where I made important connections, I am now on a trajectory toward my dream career."

Investments to the Dean's Excellence Fund accelerate the Carson College's progress toward our strategic goals and support the Carson Center for Student Success, curriculum, technology, and facilities needed to establish the college as the school of choice for our undergraduate business majors. External support directly benefits students in the classroom and also prepares them for a competitive, global business environment.

Such support also assists the work of the world-class faculty who inspire our students in and beyond our classrooms. An investment in the Dean's Excellence Fund will enable innovative and improved learning across the university in targeted areas.

[Click here for more information on how you can invest in the Dean's Excellence Fund to help students become global business professionals.](#)

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