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Early ACS grad returns with \$5M gift
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Aubrey Dan, centre, and long-time friends George Tambakis, left and Mark Walsh don hats for the Bachelor of Management and Organization Studies Program. The trio celebrated Dan's \$5-million gift to the Social Science program.

By Karmen Dowling

One of the early graduates of a groundbreaking Social Science program bridging business and academics has returned to provide the largest gift in the faculty's history.

"This program provides the foundation to create the best leaders," says Toronto business leader Aubrey Dan who will provide \$5 million to help the newly renamed Bachelor of Management and Organizational Studies (BMOS) to develop.

Dan graduated in 1985, only a few years after its inception in 1979.

In recognition of the gift, the program will be called the Aubrey Dan Program in Management and Organizational Studies. Students formerly graduated with a Bachelor of Administration and Commercial Studies (ACS) but a recent change to BMOS acknowledges emphasis on management education.

"For students to have opportunities to be managers and future CEO's, they need the skill set, they need the education," says Dan. "I feel that I've personally benefited greatly from the ACS program, so why can't other students benefit?"

The program has expanded enormously over the years, to the point it now represents about one-third of the enrolment of the Faculty of Social Sciences.

On that note, President Paul Davenport says the gift will ensure future growth.

"We are indebted to Aubrey for this generous gift and are especially proud that the new program will carry the name of an outstanding and generous graduate."

More than 2,000 students are enrolled each year and at least 40 full- and part-time faculty teach in the largest program in Faculty of Social Science. Students can specialize in Commercial Aviation Management; Finance and Administration; Finance, Administration, and Computer Science; and Organizational and Human Resources. Social Science Dean Brian Timney says the new name better reflects the program's many assets.

"This will assist us in attracting the best students and will also provide their future employers with a better understanding of what they will bring to the workforce as they begin their professional careers."

Dan draws a straight line between his education and personal success, and he believes others should, too.

"I hope that the future graduates of BMOS will be inspired as they go through their education and life learning process to be successful and remember where they came from and help the next generation."

Dan's donation will be dedicated to the following:

\$3 million to establish a Chair in Accounting to be known as the Dancap Private Equity Chair in Accounting. The endowed Chair will oversee curriculum development, and provide leadership in research and publishing.

\$925,000 in support of the Dancap Private Equity Student Awards. The endowment will support up to 19 annual awards of \$2,000 each for students in the third or fourth year of the program.

\$500,000 toward the Dancap Private Equity Faculty Fellowships. The endowment will help recruit talented scholars.

\$575,000 in support of the Dancap Private Equity Faculty Research Fund.

BMOS student Jun Bu says she has heard overwhelmingly positive feedback from her peers and others about the renaming and other changes in the program.

"Better resources in the program and a larger team of talented faculty members will certainly enhance the academic experiences of existing and future students at Western."

Dan says his goal is for BMOS to become a department, although that may be far off.

Dan is president and founder of Dancap Global Asset Management, specializing in managing alternative investments, equities, fixed income, currencies, commodities and structured products. He is also president and founder of Dancap Private Equity Inc., which makes direct investments in small and medium size companies, primarily in Canada.

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