

2019 - 2020

Academic Year

# ANNUAL REPORT



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**SAPPHIRE**  
Leadership Academic Program



**PennState**  
Smeal College  
of Business



December 2020

# THE ANNUAL REPORT

## 2019-2020 ACADEMIC YEAR

### A Year in Review

*By Vivian Ward*

#### Professional Development

The Professional Development team is dedicated to providing students the opportunity to interact with corporations and business leaders, with the purpose of preparing them for a professional career. In 2019-2020, the PD team offered the first ever Sapphire alumni mentorship pairings and created a mock career fair using upperclassmen as recruiters.

#### Leadership Development

Leadership Development is a core component of the Sapphire program, both in the classroom and through events hosted by the Leadership Team. During the academic year, a small group of Sapphires had the opportunity to spend a weekend at Quantico studying decision making tactics in high stress environments. Additionally, Sapphire hosted its first global perspectives panel, focusing on the leadership and business differences across the world.

#### Communications

The Communications team worked diligently throughout the academic year to improve the internal efficiency of the Sapphire program. Specifically, the team was a driving force behind the smooth transition to a virtual environment, ensuring strong communication with the Sapphire students regarding the points system and upcoming events.

#### Community Involvement

The Community Involvement pillar is divided between two teams: Community Service and Sapphire Involvement. The organization is not only focused on giving back to the broader Penn State community, but also ensuring strong bonding across our Sapphire cohorts. During Fall of 2019, the Community Service team partnered with organizations such as the American Red Cross to promote blood drives and 5K races. Furthermore, Sapphire Involvement revamped the Lead & Leadle mentorship program, pairing incoming first-year students with upperclassmen to grow as leaders and create connections across Smeal.

#### Sapphire THON

Sapphire THON was able to see their fundraising efforts culminate in February during the 46-hour dance marathon, raising \$11,614.49! The most popular event was Sapphire's first annual Bingo Night with Dr. Novack, raising \$345!



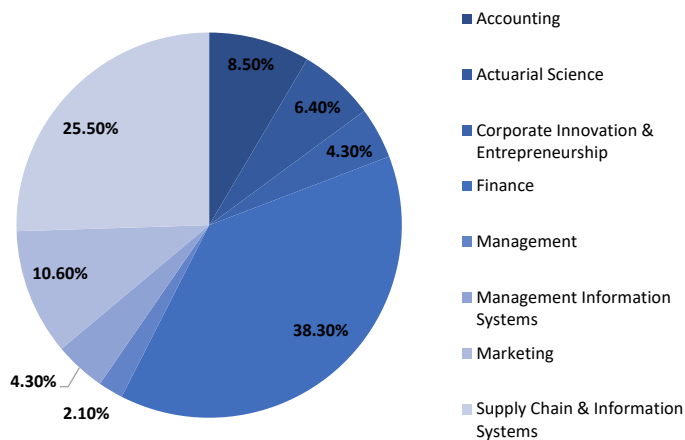
# FACTS & FIGURES

FOR THE 2019-2020 ACADEMIC YEAR

The Sapphire Leadership Academic Program fosters the development of future leaders, all with varying backgrounds and talents. In 2019-2020, Sapphire consisted of a diverse group of students, majoring in a variety of subjects across the Smeal College of Business. Additionally, Sapphire students are pursuing minors and joining organizations outside of the traditional business environment. This page highlights statistics portraying the ways in which Sapphires have gotten involved academically over the last year, preparing themselves to lead in a global business environment.

## Academics

### Declared Majors



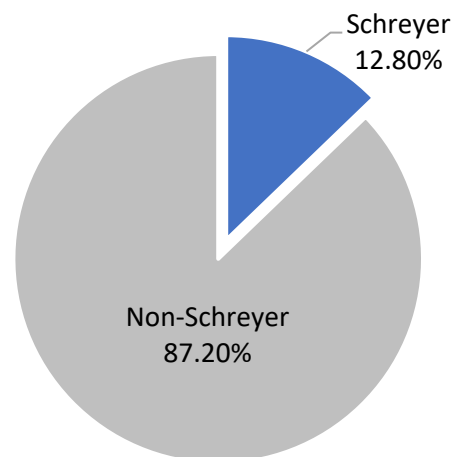
### Sapphire by the Numbers

- 12.8%** are completing **two majors**
- 48.9%** are completing a **minor**
- 8.7%** are working toward **2 or more minors**

**63%** of Sapphires are involved in a major-related organization

- Accounting Society
- Actuarial Science Club
- Penn State Investment Association
- Penn State Prime
- Nittany Lion Fund
- Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals

### Graduating Sapphires in Schreyer



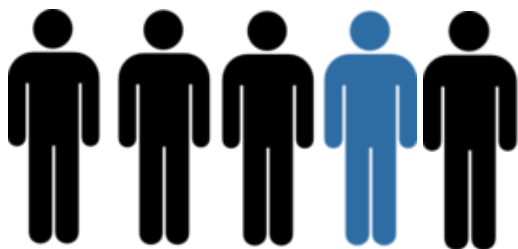
# FACTS & FIGURES (Continued)

FOR THE 2019-2020 ACADEMIC YEAR

## Involvement

**55%** of Sapphires hold at least one leadership position in another organization.

**More than 1 in 5**



Sapphires are involved in Greek Life.

**49%** of Sapphires are continuing a world language beyond the third level

**43%** of Sapphires are involved in a separate community service organization

**62%** are involved with  
**THON™**

“Sapphire provides me with an opportunity to not only learn how to grow my leadership skills, but test them firsthand through our professional development and community service programs.”

- Sydney Asencio, Class of 2022

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## 2020 Graduation Snapshot

Average SAT Score  
(Combined Math/Verbal)

**1325**

Average Graduating  
GPA

**3.79**

Employment Placement  
Rate

**94.7%**

# ENGAGEMENT

ALUMNI & THIRD PARTY

## Sapphire's Annual Leadership Symposium

As Sapphire's signature event, the Leadership Symposium is a chance for the program to showcase leadership. The event featured leaders from a broad spectrum of disciplines, from Penn State's Women's Lacrosse Head Coach Missy Doherty, to Joe Battista, professional speaker and author. The event was once more a success, drawing students and faculty from across the college to listen and learn.



## Quantico Overnight Trip

Last Fall, our Sapphire students had the opportunity to travel to Virginia for an overnight trip on the Quantico Marine Base. The students observed military training, focusing on decision-making strategy in high stake environments. They studied the power of decentralized leadership and the importance of starting with “why?”. The students also had the opportunity to speak with leaders within the Marines to have questions answered about leading under pressure and building trust within a team. The trip was concluded with a hike through the woods and a lunch of MREs, allowing Sapphires to truly immerse themselves in the Quantico experience!



# ACHIEVEMENT

## 2019-2020 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In the year 2019 – 2020, a variety of professionals and corporations took the time from their busy schedule to meet with Sapphire students in roundtable discussions and general body meetings. These individuals represent companies that look to hire Sapphire students, from major consulting firms to start-ups.

Through these opportunities, Sapphire's reputation as a program that produces successful business leaders has continued to grow. Looking at the statistics below, nearly all Sapphires had jobs lined up prior to graduation in 2020. The emphasis Sapphire places on professionalism and leadership has helped our students stand out from their peers, while their academic motivation speaks for itself.

### Top Sapphire Internship & Co-op Placement



**94.7%**

of Sapphire students had full time jobs prior to graduation, compared to 91% of Smeal

**71%**

of Sapphires with a full-time job offer received a signing bonus (56% for all of Smeal)

## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

*Grace Guo '17 - Product Development, Concertiv*



During her time at Penn State, Grace majored in Finance and Accounting with minors in International Business, Anthropology, and International Studies. Despite her heavy workload, she served as a Sapphire Overall and stated that Sapphire was a highlight of her undergraduate education.

Since graduation, Grace has had the opportunity to experience multiple industries, joining Goldman Sachs after graduation and eventually working at a block chain start-up. In July 2019, Grace moved to Concertiv and has been loving the entrepreneurial aspect of her new role in product development!

# EMERGING LEADERS

## 2019-2020 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

As in previous years, Sapphire has represented Smeal well with emerging leaders across campus. Sapphire students are involved in professional organizations, case competition teams, major-related clubs, and charitable groups. Our students have held several leadership positions in organizations throughout Smeal and across campus. Here are just a few students who made us proud in the 2020 year!



### **Eden Jacoby, Class of 2021 Supply Chain**

Eden is a Supply Chain Management major. Aside from actively participating in Sapphire, Eden serves at the Vice President of Project Management for the Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals and has been on the executive board since her freshman year. She is also a Dell Campus Ambassador and the previous secretary for Alpha Omicron Pi. Outside of the Penn State community, Eden is a team lead and volunteered for the Lymphoma Research Foundation since she was 8 years old. Eden is one of the six winners for the R. Gene Richter Scholarship—the largest national scholarship in the field of supply chain management. Eden is thrilled to begin her career at Dell Technologies in the Supply Chain Development Program.



### **Eric Diamond, Class of 2022 Finance**

Eric is a Finance major with minors in German and Economics. He has devoted his time to the student-led consulting organizations on campus, where he has served as an Engagement Manager and Director of the Consultant Training Program for the Nittany Consulting Group before becoming President of the Nittany Lion Consulting Group this past semester. Additionally, he is a member of the Phi Gamma Nu Professional Business Fraternity and has served in several mentorship roles for the Sapphire Academic Leadership Program this semester. In his time at Penn State, Eric has successfully placed in several company-sponsored business case competitions, as well as the CAS100A public speaking competition.



### **Michael Mitole, Class of 2023 Finance**

Michael is a sophomore intending to major in Finance. He has won 5 case competitions with companies including Deloitte, KPMG, and PwC & had the chance to compete against students from top business schools around the country. Michael is a member of the Presidential Leadership Academy and was an orientation leader for Penn State, leading students from 23 countries around the world. As a Sapphire, Michael has challenged himself through his various involvements in professional, leadership, and community domains. In February of 2021, he will speak at TEDxPSU's conference about his experience as an orientation leader and will be interning with the Boston Consulting Group in their Pittsburgh office during the summer of 2021.

# COVID-19 TRANSITION

2019-2020 ANNUAL REPORT

## TRANSITION TO VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENT

Due to the COVID-19 virus outbreak, Penn State announced that students would be finishing the 2020 Spring semester virtually. As students transitioned to virtual learning, the Leadership Team and faculty decided that all Sapphire events would be postponed until students return to campus. Many of the events planned for the Spring semester, such as the first-year case competition and the Lead & Leadle program, will be scheduled for the Fall semester.

The Leadership Team has spent the past few months preparing the Fall 2020 schedule, including countless new events that we are eager to announce to our members. We have been working diligently to ensure that every event provides lasting purpose to our members, with hopes that the Sapphire students are continuing to grow as leaders throughout all four years at Penn State. Furthermore, with the extra time to allocate towards Sapphire, the Leadership Team is brainstorming innovative ways to further enhance our culture, such as mentor programs that pair incoming first-years with upperclassman. We are very excited for the semester ahead of us and cannot wait to get back on campus!

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## DISTINGUISHED AWARD RECIPIENTS

Smeal presents awards to a select few outstanding students who have demonstrated excellent academic performance, leadership, and service to Smeal and the wider community. Sapphires are consistently among the high-achieving, well-rounded award recipients.

**The Helen Eakin Eisenhower Award:**

Frankie Haver

**The Ralph H. Wherry Student Service Award:**

Jessica Anninos  
Courtney Fisher  
Sarah Roman  
Demetrios Speros

**Smeal Alumni Society Board Award:**

Elissa Adams

**Spring 2019 Risk Management Student Marshal:**

Grace McStravock

**Spring 2019 Smeal College Marshal:**

Faith Hatchard



Two of our graduating Sapphire seniors finished with a 4.0 Cumulative GPA!

Additionally, one Sapphire was a member of the Presidential Leadership Academy.

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Check out our website: [Sapphire.smeal.psu.edu](http://Sapphire.smeal.psu.edu)



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Sapphire Leadership  
Academic Program



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