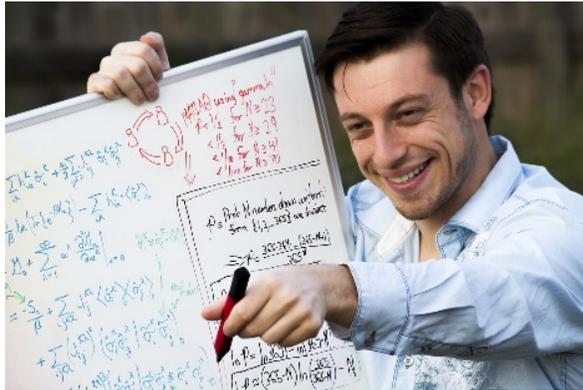


**Student Profile**

**Brian Briskey – Fully Employed MBA Program**



**Your Time at UCI**

What made you decide to pursue a graduate degree?

*My entrepreneurial ambitions compelled me to find new ways of critical thinking and innovative business practices so that I could enter new markets and compete against disruptive business models for personal and professional success.*

Why did you choose to come to UCI?

*The Merage School of Business became my first choice when I discovered its abundant resources for entrepreneurs such as the New Venture Pitch Competition held every year, the multiple Centers of Excellence with special experts and facilities, which complement the gracious ratio of electives to core classes in a customizable degree plan. I knew this school was primed for generating leaders needed by emerging industries for what will become the source of prosperity in our future economy.*

If you are conducting research, how would you explain your research and its significance to your grandparent?

*My research helps business owners make decisions about their markets and competition by using software rather than relying on armies of analysts and consultants. Empowering small and medium sized business owners with the same level of insights as those currently enjoyed by only the biggest of enterprise firms is likely to impact our local prosperity by enhancing our nation's competitive advantage in a global economy.*

What are your hobbies/passions outside of research?

*I am an entrepreneur, which in my heart is being a pioneer. So I backpack and camp in our national parks, travel overseas to meet and visit unique and interesting people, and read the biographies of historical leaders to learn and embody their traits.*

**Reflections**

What are you most proud of accomplishing (so far) in your graduate program?

*I'm proud of entering the New Venture competition in my first year - only to fail in the first round, and then reentering in my second year – only to fail at the final round, so I can reenter in my third year and possibly win the competition – all because the real reward is lessons learned only through failure after facing challenges with bold risk.*

What is your most memorable moment/experience at UCI to date?

*I will always remember the evening following a Distinguished Speaker Series, several professors and a few business executives of Fortune 500 companies entered into a heated discussion about a recent business drama that was unfolding publicly. The various expert perspectives swung wildly across topics from economics to marketing to law; and I was so pleased to have an understanding of the subject matter, especially when invited to share with the group a relevant experience I had recently gained through one of the Merage mentorship programs. That moment was surreal and yet came so naturally thanks to the education and opportunities to hone my professional craft at Merage.*

What advice do you have for a new graduate student in your program?

*Change your mind about what an MBA “really” means for your future. It is not a piece of paper entitling you to some office with a window view and a better looking resume. An MBA is actually a portal through which you'll be able to look through the eyes of some of the greatest business minds humanity has ever produces. The tools, case study, strategic frameworks, and education are all designed to help you think very differently about problems – much like the way a mathematical genius sees equations dance in the air, a Merage graduate sees economics, marketing, operations, law, organization, and strategy all around them.*

## **Career**

What do you see yourself doing in five or ten years?

*I'll have closed the sale on my current startup business through acquisition in five years from now and begin a year-long journey of world travel to explore emerging markets in developing nations, stopping for consulting work and relationship building. Over the next five years, I'll have embarked on writing and research projects outside of, but in collaboration with, academia while dedicating the majority of my time toward helping bring business education to young adults in distressed communities within the US.*

How do you hope to make a difference?

*I believe that US prosperity, previously built on industrialization and then innovation, was served well by educating generations of compliant and risk-averse employees for big businesses. That may have been strategically good for our economy in the past but it has squandered our nation's pioneering spirit needed today. As change continues, as*

*people becomes outsourced or replaced by technology altogether, we need to revive our collective instinct for entrepreneurship to keep the American Dream alive. My quest, first in launching a technology startup that serves business leaders, and then by supporting educational programs for young adults to explore entrepreneurship, is to renew that spirit and instinct in our nation because our prosperity is directly dependent on our economic success.*