

UCI Paul Merage School of Business

Leadership for a Digitally Driven World™

MERAGE SCHOOL CASE STATEMENT



BRILLIANT FUTURE
THE CAMPAIGN FOR UCI



“Student success is built through learning and mentorship that embraces diverse backgrounds. The Paul Merage School of Business focuses on this core theme: to provide opportunities that enhance the social and economic well-being of our students’ diverse communities. This can only be done by harnessing technology and attracting innovative researchers and top international faculty, in partnership with leading global and local businesses.”

— **Ian O. Williamson**, Dean of the
UCI Paul Merage School of Business

A FUNDAMENTAL TENANT OF THE PAUL **MERAGE SCHOOL** OF BUSINESS: DIVERSITY FOSTERS THE INNOVATION BUSINESSES NEED IN A GLOBAL LANDSCAPE

Innovation begins with a dream. With approximately 50 percent of undergraduate students self-identifying as first-generation college students, UCI underscores educational opportunities essential to long-term success. As a result, we support entrepreneurship and the technological innovations students need to support their communities and propel the economy forward.



“As a first-generation college student, I will be the first and only person in my family to have an MBA. I greatly value this opportunity to advance academically, and the Merage School’s support goes a long way in helping me achieve my goals. Continuing my studies wouldn’t be possible without the generous support from the community.”

— **Alanna Cooney**, MBA Candidate Class of 2023
Fully Employed MBA Program

THE INTERSECTION OF INNOVATION

The Merage School delivers a forward-thinking curriculum to exceptional students. Our acclaimed faculty members combine the best of academic research and real-world strategies. As a result, we develop leaders who use business and entrepreneurship to harness technology and create economic and social well-being for communities. This holistic understanding of technology, commercialization and social impact is a distinguishing feature of the Merage School experience.

Moreover, the Merage School leverages campus partnerships with UCI's highly ranked information and computer science, arts, engineering and health programs to transform the way we think of business. We create new pathways for learning, such as the Masters of Innovation and Entrepreneurship program, which is the only one of its kind in the UC system.

As students and faculty utilize the resources of a top-tier research university, they have access to one of the leading computer science schools in the world and collaborate with the only School of Medicine in Orange County. They turn ideas into far-reaching solutions that influence health and life sciences, data, cloud computing, artificial intelligence and more.



Eva Wolf, CEO of Airwolf 3D



"The MIE program gave me the mentorship, connections, and opportunities to grow as an entrepreneur. Thankfully, the Morage School has connected me to mentors and coaches who can offer the feedback I need to grow. A lot of us have bright ideas that can impact and change the world. We just need a chance to get our ideas off the ground."

—Jordyn Weaver, MIE '21

SCHOLARSHIPS & FELLOWSHIPS: THE ESSENCE OF **PROVIDING OPPORTUNITY**

The Merage School increases access to a world-class education – as represented by our student body, which embraces all the racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds across the globe and in our local communities. Financial support through scholarships and fellowships creates life-changing opportunities for many who come from underserved areas or disadvantaged economic backgrounds, and who often are the first in their families to attend a university.

Scholarships and fellowships open doors, so talented students can pursue their dreams and fully benefit from experiential learning. Individuals and corporations can also award scholarships to students pursuing interests in fields that are immediate recruitment pools for their industries. Without this support, visionaries and

business leaders might not have access to the training they need to realize their potential.

The Merage School also understands that we need additional resources to support the academic success and well-being of students within the business sectors that have been historically underrepresented. This requires systemic efforts that include recruiting and retaining globally recognized diverse faculty through endowed chairs. We can then achieve our goal of instruction based on both research and real-world implications, working toward equity as we address the needs of a diverse student body. This builds upon our tenant of inclusivity – cultivating talent from all social and economic backgrounds.



“I’m a first-generation college student from South Korea, coming from a low-socioeconomic background. Growing up with a strong belief in the merit of hard-work, I was raised to be a person who commits to values such as integrity. All of my experiences contributed to becoming the person I am today, one who is passionate about giving back and providing a positive impact for the community. Through the lifted financial burden that came from Merage School donors, I was able to commit my time to opportunities such as serving the Merage School community as a part of MUSA and founding the first HR business organization at UCI.”

—John Kim, BA '22





MERAGE SCHOOL VENTURE CAPITAL FUND: SUPPORTING INGENUITY

With a strong reputation in entrepreneurship, innovation and a connected community of alumni, students and faculty, the Merage School Venture Capital Fund sees diversity as one of the fundamental components to organizational success. As research shows a large underrepresentation of people of color and women as technology firm founders, venture capitalists, and directors in technology-based businesses, the Merage School Venture Capital Fund works to accelerate the pipelines engaged in the cultivation of this underrepresented talent.

At its core, the Merage School Venture Capital Fund offers direct practical experience to the next generation of entrepreneurs, providing an ecosystem where students, faculty and businesses work collectively to leverage science, innovation and business acumen to create solutions.

The Merage School Venture Capital Fund will:

- Train the next generation of venture capitalists,
- thus diversifying the pool of talent making investment decisions.
- Provide sources of capital for technology-based firms led by economically disadvantaged communities.
- Increase the interest of students from different ethnic backgrounds and academic majors with careers in technology-based firms.
- Strengthen UCI's entrepreneurship ecosystem by leveraging the UC system's only Master of Innovation and Entrepreneurship and Undergraduate Entrepreneurship minor, as well as through partnerships with the Beall Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship and world-renowned faculty.
- Partner with external organizations to create tailored programs and research opportunities for businesses and professional development on topics such as artificial intelligence, machine learning and fintech.

Zarina Bahadur MIE '20, built Baby Box to help new parents shop for their growing family. She is the first Master of Innovation and Entrepreneurship (MIE) student to win the New Venture Competition.



FROM THE CLASSROOM TO THE BOARDROOM TO THE COMMUNITY

The Merage School provides unique field study opportunities that can transform businesses on both global and micro levels. Students collaborate with world-renowned faculty and industry leaders to deliver consulting projects that range from strategy and finance to operations, marketing, organizational behavior and every other aspect of business. The field study lets students apply their talents to real-world situations while giving businesses, from international enterprises to local organizations, the specific support they need.

Leveraging the expertise and resources of the school's seven Centers of Excellence, this field study program boosts economic development by providing consulting services, capital and a platform for new start-ups to launch and longstanding businesses to become stronger.

The programs feature:

- Capability development, for both global and local businesses
- Strategy consulting

- Risk mitigation
- Collaboration with the Centers of Excellence
- Pipeline of talent

While larger companies will pay for these services, philanthropic support for the program will enable students and faculty to help small, local businesses who would not otherwise have access. This is how we propel the economy and enable underrepresented businesses to thrive – this is meaningful impact.





—Mary Gilly

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FINTECH: THE PURSUIT OF A MORE EVEN PLAYING FIELD

Technology has the power to address the major social problems embedded in society today. In particular, financial technology (fintech) – from apps that let us send money to microlending – can produce innovations in commercial activities that bolster economic prosperity and increase social well-being for all communities.

Supporting the Merage School's fintech focus

will help us recruit top fintech experts to guide curriculum, strategy and programming. With donor support, we can assist Fortune 1000 firms, start-up companies, local business owners and consumers improve their financial operations and eliminate barriers to financial literacy to make the flow of information and funds more egalitarian.

age School of Business



“Southern California is a hot bed of Fintech companies. The ongoing activities in this domain help develop the region into a global hub of fintech innovation and talent which continues to drive regional economic and social well-being.”

— **Christopher Schwarz**

Associate Professor, Finance and Director,
Center for Investment and Wealth Management

INFINITE POSSIBILITIES:

THE SEVEN CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE

The Merage School's seven Centers of Excellence are hubs for experiential learning and provide expertise in how entrepreneurship, technology and diversity are transforming global and local economies. Within the centers, students and faculty work collaboratively, providing the functional scaffolding that fosters individual ambition. The centers also reach out to local and underserved communities, enhancing the capacity, financial wherewithal, and ultimate success of business owners and family businesses. This transcends the ivory tower and creates a real-world impact for those who need it most.

By supporting the centers, donors advance the American dream by helping students, faculty, businesses and communities thrive. From entrepreneurship to healthcare, from underserved areas to global markets, the centers provide the specificity and leverage we need to forge conscientious leaders and transform markets.

Beall Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (BCIE)

Leveraging strong industry partnerships to offer students practical, hands-on experiences in entrepreneurship and business creation, and intrapreneurship within larger organizations.

Center for Digital Transformation (CDT)

Generating and disseminating knowledge to help businesses, governments and society advance competitiveness and productivity in the digital economy.

Center for Global Leadership (CGL)

Building leadership skills for a global economy while promoting awareness and relationships across industries and cultures.

Center for Health Care Management and Policy (CHCMP)

Building stronger ties with the healthcare community in Orange County and beyond by engaging partners in collaborative research and education efforts as well as community service programs.

Center for Investment and Wealth Management (CIWM)

Developing transformational leaders and educational programs on financial literacy, investment and wealth management strategies.

Center for Real Estate (CRE)

Fostering collaboration among students, faculty and business leaders to define how innovation drives sustainability and profitability in real estate markets.

UCI Long U.S.-China Institute

Fostering bilateral engagement between China and the U.S., supporting scholarship and events that facilitate mutual understanding, and highlighting diverse voices and disciplinary approaches.





AN ROI WITH A GREATER PURPOSE

Philanthropic investment in the Merage School fosters innovation and solutions that address the critical needs facing businesses today. A principal gift is a meaningful and powerful way to develop future leaders and high-quality educational programs that can service these needs.

With multi-fold options to get involved – from

naming opportunities to establishing endowed scholarships – we can customize paths for your philanthropy to have the greatest impact, as well as reflect your personal values and objectives.

The ways for individuals and organizations to support the Merage School are unlimited. Currently, philanthropic and strategic support is focused on the following categories:

Current Need: \$60 Million

- **Merage School Scholarships – \$3 Million**
Scholarship support plays a critical role at UCI in relieving financial pressures and enabling students to experience the rich educational opportunities available. Fulfilling the dream of a world-class university degree requires the assistance of scholarships for our low- and



"I am a product of the University of California. My education helped inspire my path to entrepreneurship and afforded me an open mind as I continuously reinvented myself and my work. Access to public education fuels our economy, strengthens our communities, and equips those of the highest merit with the knowledge and network necessary to achieve the American dream."

— Paul Merage

middle-income students – not just those awarded by the university or the government, but those provided by our community leaders: philanthropists, companies and foundations. The benefits extend well beyond the recipient themselves. This support benefits the broader community and enables UCI to attract more top-achieving, highly sought-after students who receive outstanding financial aid

packages from other universities.

- **Merage School Fellowships – \$3 Million**
Fellowships provide an intellectually stimulating environment that exposes PhD students to the world of business research. The fellowship program aims to provide life-changing educational and developmental experiences for students to conduct groundbreaking corporate research to advance knowledge and

practice in the industry, providing graduate students with the ability to thrive during their graduate program experience.

- **Venture Capital Fund – \$25 Million**
An endowed venture capital fund will help recruit world-class faculty and provide seed investments for innovative businesses, with a focus on the local Southern California marketplace. Through these opportunities,



students will gain essential experiential learning experiences and training to help them become the next generation of venture capitalists, entrepreneurs, and academic leaders. Funds will also provide capital to businesses that will allow students from under-represented groups to gain professional experience. These students will be supported through career development training and internship opportunities, instilling key elements vital to the success of business

professionals in the workforce.

- **Financial Technology Cluster Hire – \$10 Million (Five Chairs, Three-Year Terms Each)**

An endowed chair represents one of the highest honors a faculty member can receive. Chairs provide the prestige and resources necessary for the Office of the Provost to recruit and retain prominent scholars dedicated to inclusive excellence. With demonstrated commitments to studying

financial technology, chair holders raise the stature of The Paul Merage School of Business and mentor future generations. Students from across the UCI campus will have opportunities to explore new frontiers of knowledge with pioneers in their fields.

These funds will be utilized to attract and develop exceptional scholarship through multi-year cluster hires and term chair opportunities. Once selected, these chairs will move forward



in serving the industry with cutting edge research, driving innovation towards new products and services.

- **Centers of Excellence Naming Opportunity – \$14 Million (\$2 Million per center)**

An endowment in support of The Paul Merage School of Business will name the Centers of Excellence and maximize influence on underserved communities by creating more programs with a social impact. The

endowment not only will ensure a lasting impression on today's students and scholars, but also will support a sustainable pathway for future change within our communities.

- **Field Study Initiative – \$5 Million (\$2.5 Million Faculty Endowment, \$1.5 Million Faculty Asst. Endowment, \$1 Million Endowment for Course Credit/Internship Opportunities)**
Empowering young minds through knowledge and exposure, supporting the field study

initiative secures opportunities for students to gain necessary experience in their area of study. Through these efforts, this fund will cover the credit for a cohort of up to 30 students, an opening for internships, and provide curious young minds the space to succeed.





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