When you're the underdog, every bit of support helps. That's one reason why Vincent Daniel ’94 says he regularly offers his time, expertise and charitable gifts to support Binghamton University and its students. Daniel says there weren't many financial firms recruiting at Binghamton when he was a student. Still, he was bitten by the excitement of working on Wall Street. So he majored in accounting, thinking it would give him a solid foundation and carved-out path from classroom to career.

“In many respects, you're the hardworking underdogs. There's something inside of me that loves that,” says Daniel, general partner of Seawolf Capital in Manhattan, a hedge fund he co-founded. “Wall Street recruits Ivy League kids. They will recruit music majors from Princeton. To do what we do, to get your foot in the door from Binghamton, you have to be an extremely hard worker. …

“Dean Dhillon and everyone else have done an unbelievable job of getting Wall Street to know Binghamton University.”

The connection between alumni and students has been critical in growing Binghamton’s reputation among elite public business schools, says Upinder Dhillon, dean of the School of Management.

“In particular, Vincent’s investment in the school and the mentoring and summer internship opportunities he has provided for our students has a significant impact,” Dhillon says. “He brings a unique perspective due to his contrarian approach to investing, which is highlighted in The Big Short.”

For Daniel, it is important to stay involved and invested in Binghamton. He has been a judge for the Finance Society’s stock pitch competition and taught an arbitrage and capital markets research class on campus.

“Binghamton had a profound impact on my life,” he says. “It is one of the reasons why I’m where I am today. If I’m in a position to give back, why not do so?”

Alumni invests in Binghamton

You have a role in student success

You have a role in student success

The Big Short movie

The Big Short, Michael Lewis’ 2010 best-selling book on the subprime mortgage crisis, is being made into a movie that will reportedly star Brad Pitt, Ryan Gosling, Christian Bale and Steve Carell.

“The whole thing is surreal to me,” Daniel says.

Daniel foresaw the 2008 implosion of the financial industry, according to a fall 2010 article in Binghamton University Magazine. Considered one of the heroes in The Big Short, Daniel understood the shaky underpinnings of the real-estate bubble and invested millions on the assumption the mortgage market would collapse.

Alumnus: Virtual reality key to overcoming disorders

Albert “Skip” Rizzo, PhD ’91, spoke to the Binghamton University Forum in March about how virtual reality technology can provide an immersive environment to treat and improve the lives of those with post-traumatic stress and other disorders.

Here, he is pictured describing recent advances in virtual reality-based exposure therapy to students and faculty at the Watson School’s Seymour Kunis Media Core, which was established by benefactor Gary Kunis ’73, LHD ’02.

Rizzo, who earned his doctorate in psychology, has been profiled on CNN. He is director of Medical Virtual Reality for the University of California’s Institute for Creative Technologies and research professor in the University of Southern California’s Department of Psychiatry and School of Gerontology.
Grant to foster student research in chemistry

You open doors to special learning opportunities

J effrey S. Beck ’84 made such a difference in people’s lives that when he died in 2012 at age 49, his wife, Lisa C. Beck, felt compelled to ensure his legacy of helping others lived on. She recently established the Jeffrey S. Beck Summer Research Grant to honor her late husband and support students studying chemistry, Jeff’s major when he was at Binghamton University.

“She had such an amazing career,” Lisa says. “Going to Binghamton as an undergrad is really what started everything.”

Students gain a valuable head start if they can obtain research experience as undergraduates before they enter the workforce to help pay for college unless a donor has stepped in to provide them with a stipend to offset summer living expenses, Jones says. A Beck grant recipient will receive support to conduct research for 10 weeks and a fellowship stipend to offset summer living expenses, Jones says. The recipient will also have access to professional development activities by participating in the cohort of students in Jones’ Research Experiences for Undergraduates, a program of the National Science Foundation. At the end of the summer, the student will present their work at an undergraduate summer research showcase.

“Hopefully, their research will lead them to opportunities that start,” says Gloria E. Meredith, founding dean of the School of Pharmacy. “Lisa knows that a well-trained pharmacist can make a crucial difference in people’s lives. Thus, the impact of her gift will be felt for many years to come.”

Beck notes that she and her husband, Richard, are graduates of public universities. Scholarship and fellowship support helped her pursue higher education. Endowing the faculty fellowship is one way for her to give back her good fortune to others, Brandt says. “We both believe in public universities,” she says. “Private universities get enough money from truly rich alumni and corporate sponsors. They don’t need us so much, but public universities do.”

Richard was a chemical engineer who had his own start at Binghamton University. He went on to lead ExxonMobil’s corporate strategic research and had several assignments in the business, including technical manager at the Baytown Refinery in Texas and polyethylene global marketing manager.

Throughout his career, he contributed to the discovery and commercialization of novel catalysts and processes for the production of key petrochemicals and clean fuels. He received numerous national and international awards and authored nearly 75 U.S. patents.

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