



EXECUTIVE EAGLE NEWSLETTER



DAUCH COBE PARTNERS WITH ETHIOPIAN COLLEGE

In a June 2015 article in BloombergBusiness, Ethiopia was singled out as the “hot new investment destination” in Africa. Projected to be the tenth most populous country in the world by 2050, Ethiopia is the headquarters of the African Union (the “United Nations” of African countries) and has one of the fastest growing economies in the world. Dauch COBE was ahead of the curve when it began its relationship with the Leadstar College of Management and Leadership, based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in 2012. Dr. Ray Jacobs, Associate Dean and Chair of the MBA program in the Dauch College of Business and Economics, first met Dr. Gemechis Desta Buba, President of Leadstar, at a meeting on mission opportunities held at Trinity Lutheran Church in Ashland. From this initial meeting grew a relationship that led to multiple trips to Ethiopia by Dr. Jacobs and a formal relationship between Ashland University and Leadstar designed to assist Leadstar in developing its own MBA program in order to provide a high quality, affordable, and accessible education to students in Ethiopia. This extremely successful relationship enabled Leadstar to rapidly develop and deploy a new MBA program from scratch, using curriculum materials, administrative documents, advice, and mentoring from COBE and Dr. Jacobs.

Traveling to Ethiopia in May 2013 and again in May 2014, Dr. Jacobs met with the faculty and administrators of Leadstar, as well as with top government officials including the Speaker of the House of Parliament, a Deputy Prime Minister, and the Director General of Ethiopia’s Higher Education Relevance and Quality Agency (HERQA). Dr. Jacobs gave the keynote speech, “The MBA Degree: Producing Leaders Capable of Transforming and Modernizing the Ethiopian Economy”, at Leadstar’s first international conference in May 2014, following opening remarks given by the State Minister for Higher Education. In August 2014, Leadstar’s MBA program was officially accredited by HERQA, an approval from the Ethiopian government necessary for the program to continue. On August 22, 2015, Dr. Jacobs was the commencement speaker at the first ever graduation at Leadstar College of Management and Leadership, when over one thousand students, including several hundred MBA students, received their degrees. Two days following the graduation, Dr. Jacobs and several other members of the Leadstar board met with Dr. Mulatu Teshome, President of Ethiopia, at the presidential palace.

“Working with Dr. Gemechis and the administrators, faculty and staff at Leadstar has been an incredibly rewarding experience for me,” said Dr. Jacobs. “The Ethiopian people were very welcoming to me, and I was able to visit many locations throughout the country, meeting business owners, government officials, and even the President of Ethiopia. Dr. Gemechis is well-known in Ethiopia, where his Internet and satellite television ministry, broadcast from Atlanta, is seen by millions of Ethiopians. During my travels with him I attended many church services, and even some weddings! His vision in providing educational opportunities to the Ethiopian people to help eradicate poverty and transform the country is truly inspirational, and I am honored to have been a part of his work at Leadstar. Ethiopians have a hunger for education and are highly motivated to learn. It was extremely gratifying to talk personally with many of the graduates, who were very appreciative of Ashland University’s work with Leadstar, giving them the opportunity to earn a Leadstar MBA. As a result of this relationship between our institutions, several Ethiopian students have enrolled at Ashland University to study, and I am hopeful that we will create new opportunities for our faculty and students to travel to Ethiopia.”