Friends of GSB-LSU Encouraged to Educate Staff at GSB-WI Bank Technology Management School and Bank Technology Security School

Recognizing the need to provide timely, high-quality educational opportunities for bankers in the critical areas of technology management and information security, the Graduate School of Banking at Louisiana State University (GSB-LSU) is encouraging its alumni to educate their IT staff at the Bank Technology Management School and the Bank Technology Security School, each developed and offered by the Graduate School of Banking at the University of Wisconsin – Madison (GSB-WI). The schools, held in April and October, respectively, provide a solid foundation in the business of banking for IT professionals as well as management or security-specific curriculums that include lecture, small group interaction and hands-on lab exercises.

“Information assurance and proactive technology and vendor management are critical to a bank’s success. These schools provide the industry’s best training in these very important areas; that’s why we endorse these schools for our graduates, and encourage friends of GSB-LSU to consider these exceptional programs for training bank staff,” said Don Woodland, executive vice president and director, GSB-LSU. “This is about what’s best for the industry,” added Woodland, noting “we’re very pleased to share information about these opportunities with our network of alumni and supporters, because the industry as a whole is stronger when we share knowledge.”

Kirby Davidson, president and CEO, GSB-WI, welcomes the participation of GSB-LSU alumni and their staff. “Both of our graduate banking schools have long, proud histories of educating bankers and well-deserved reputations for academic excellence,” said Davidson, adding, “When an organization with GSB-LSU’s outstanding reputation recognizes the quality of our specialty schools, it means a lot. We’re very pleased and proud to work with them and their esteemed alumni. It’s our hope to welcome a number of GSB-LSU alumni and their technology staff to our beautiful hometown of Madison, Wis., in 2016, and to potentially host these schools in Southern locations in future years.”

For information and online enrollment please visit the GSB-WI website at gsb.org. Details, including online enrollment, are available for the Bank Technology Management School (April 17-22, 2016) and the Bank Technology Security School (October 23-28, 2016); or, please call 800-755-6440 with any questions about these outstanding programs.
Meet the Change Agent

Alan Oatsvall, information security officer and IT manager of Citizen’s State bank in Okemah, Oklahoma, has never refused a challenge. So when the former military man and nearly 20-year retail professional was approached in 2010 to take on a new opportunity in an industry he knew nothing about, it was an offer he found impossible to turn down.

One day in 2010, Oatsvall, who was a retail consultant and independent contractor working for Hilco Merchant Resources, Chicago, met an old friend for lunch. By the time lunch ended, he was considering taking a position he knew nothing about, in an industry of which he knew even less. Knowing Oatsvall was between projects, his friend who was also the president of Citizen’s State Bank told him of a position he had open for an information security officer (ISO) and asked if he would be interested.

“I told him I had zero experience and had no idea what he was even thinking about when he was talking to me about it,” Oatsvall admits. “He said he was looking for someone willing to learn and willing to come in and do that; and he knew me well enough to know that I’ve never been afraid of a challenge.”

Oatsvall, who was on the road 6-12 weeks at a time as a consultant, also looked at the position as an opportunity to get off the road, so he accepted it and began in July 2010. Having served in the army for 11 years followed by 18 years of leadership roles in retail, this was new territory for him. Other than for personal purposes, he had no IT experience. He knew he would immediately need training and a toolbox to learn how to manage IT and the information security side of banking, but more importantly learn the business of banking as well.

Within a few months he heard about GSB in Madison and its week-long Bank Technology Management School. He attended the inaugural course and completed it in April 2011.

Although he had attended webinars, computer repair seminars and other local education options, he recognized that he needed solid background training to succeed in this new terrain. GSB offered everything he was searching for. That would be the beginning of what would become a long-standing association with GSB. Oatsvall subsequently sat on a committee to help GSB shape the curriculum of the Advanced IT Forum and in October 2015 completed the Bank Technology Security School.

“Once I got there, I was sold,” he says. “The staff were so helpful and it was so well run. They are all just wonderful people and they work hard to make sure the programs are all done correctly. That’s made it easy to continue to pursue anything they have coming out of there because I know without a doubt that the product they’re producing is a project of excellence.”
“Networking with other people in the industry is valuable because I can pick up the phone and ask anybody in Iowa that I’ve gone to school with or in Missouri, Wisconsin, Illinois or Oklahoma ‘Hey, have you seen anything like this out there?’ And before you know it, we’re having a conversation about just that and what they did to manage that process,’” he says.

Oatsvall’s exuberance for new experiences extends to his personal life. Married with five children, four grandchildren and one more on the way, he and his wife enjoy traveling. In addition to frequently visiting children and grandchildren in different parts of the country, they take a cruise almost every year.

“My mom always told me I have gypsy in my blood because I love to travel so much,” he says with a laugh. “I don’t like to stay idle.” And Oatsvall admits he’s never met a stranger.

“I have to get out there and meet more people. There are a lot of people to meet in this world and I have to get out there and meet them before I go. You never know!”

A former Wisconsin resident, he is a die-hard Green Bay Packers fan and owner, and jokingly refers to himself as a “Packer backer and cheese head extraordinaire.” When not watching his team on television or live, he makes time for several other hobbies, including spending time and raising animals on his land in Oklahoma, hunting and cycling.

“In the summertime I probably average 200 miles per week riding my bicycle,” he says.

He enjoys training and competing just for the fun of it and in August 2015, completed his first 100-mile event in Wichita Texas. He finished the Triple H, which stands for Hotter than Hell Hundred in reference to the high temperatures, in just under six hours.

“The last several years it’s been a goal of mine to do that event,” he says. “That’s how I stay fit so I can live to be 100. Life is short. I want to live to be 100 years old and I’m half way there.”

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**GSB Scholarships – Application Deadlines Soon**

The Herbert V. Prochnow Educational Foundation is named in honor of the founder of the Graduate School of Banking, Herbert V. Prochnow. Each year, the foundation offers scholarships to bankers entering their first year at GSB, as well as for students in the Human Resource Management School. For details, applications and deadlines to apply, please visit the scholarships page of the GSB website.

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**Deadlines for Spring Programs Coming Up Quickly**

Three spring programs have deadlines coming up quickly – those interested in attending the Bank Technology Management School, Human Resource Management School or Financial Managers School are encouraged to register now, while limited space remains. Please note that enrollment deadlines are 30 days prior to the program start date.

**Human Resource Management School**

April 10-15, Madison, Wis.

**Bank Technology Management School**

April 17-22, Madison, Wis.

**Financial Managers School**

May 9-13, Amherst, Mass. (Also offered in September, in Madison, Wis.)