

BLACK ISSUES IN HIGHER EDUCATION®

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**Steering minorities
toward business
doctorates**

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map to the MBA**
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competitive edge:
seeking business
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SPECIAL REPORT: CAREERS

THE BUSINESS OF TEACHING BUSINESS

WEBSTER UNIVERSITY'S DR. BENJAMIN OLA AKANDE,
DEAN OF THE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND TECHNOLOGY, PG. 30

'Reality-Based Education'

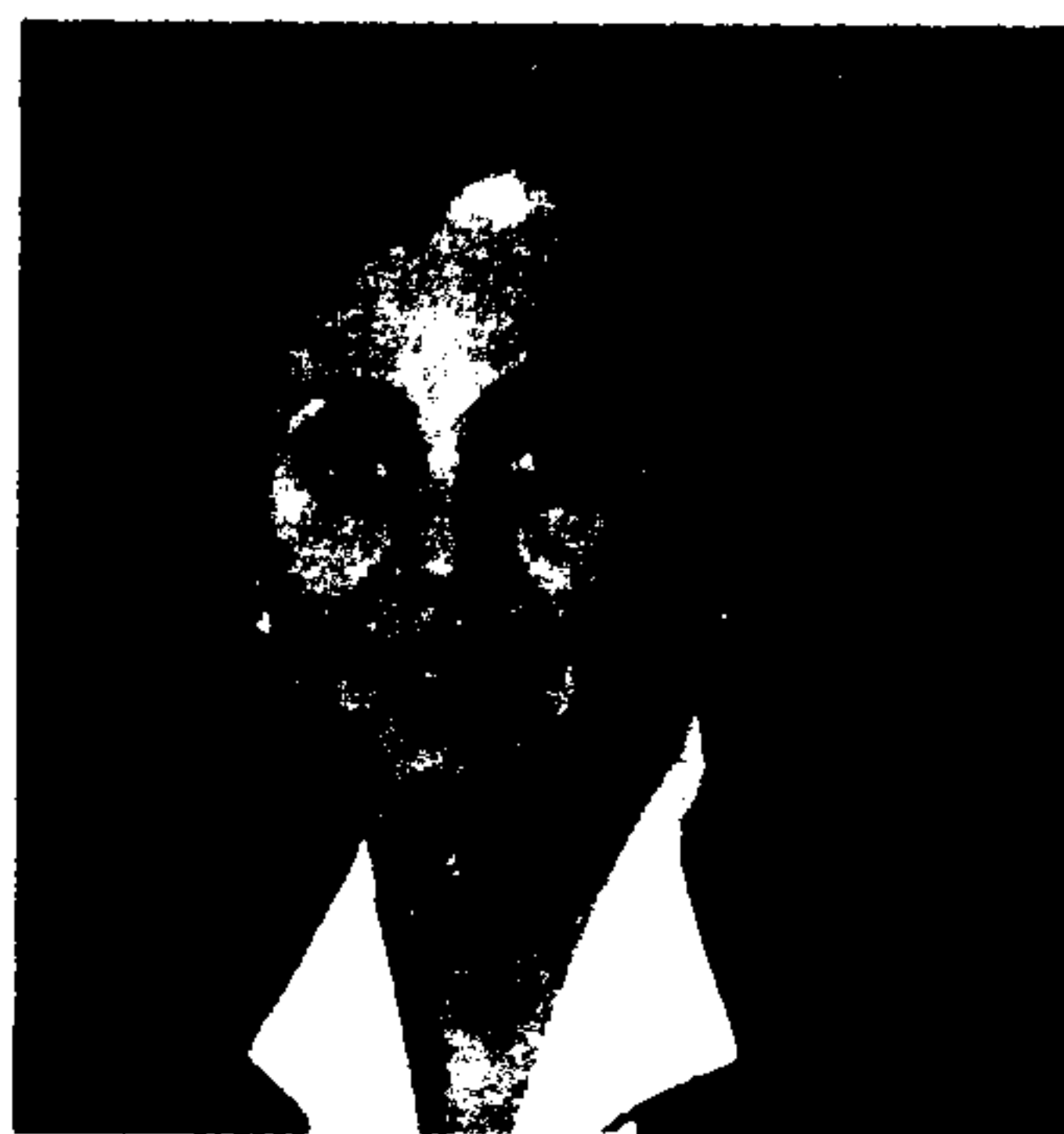
WEBSTER UNIVERSITY'S AGGRESSIVE MARKETING AND FLEXIBLE SCHEDULING LEAD TO A LARGE ENROLLMENT, BUT ACCREDITATION QUESTIONS PERSIST.

By Pearl Stewart

Twenty-one years ago Brenda Newberry had just given birth to her first child, a girl, in a St. Louis hospital. The next day, she had a visitor, one of her professors from Webster University where she was enrolled in the graduate business management program. Her visitor wasn't bearing gifts. Instead, he presented Newberry with her final exams, which she took right there in the room.

At the time, Newberry and her husband, Maurice, were in the Air Force, starting a family and attending grad school. "The only way we could get it all done was to attend a school like Webster where the classes suited our schedules," says Newberry.

She went into management jobs at McDonnell Douglas and MasterCard, where she became a unit vice president. Today, she is



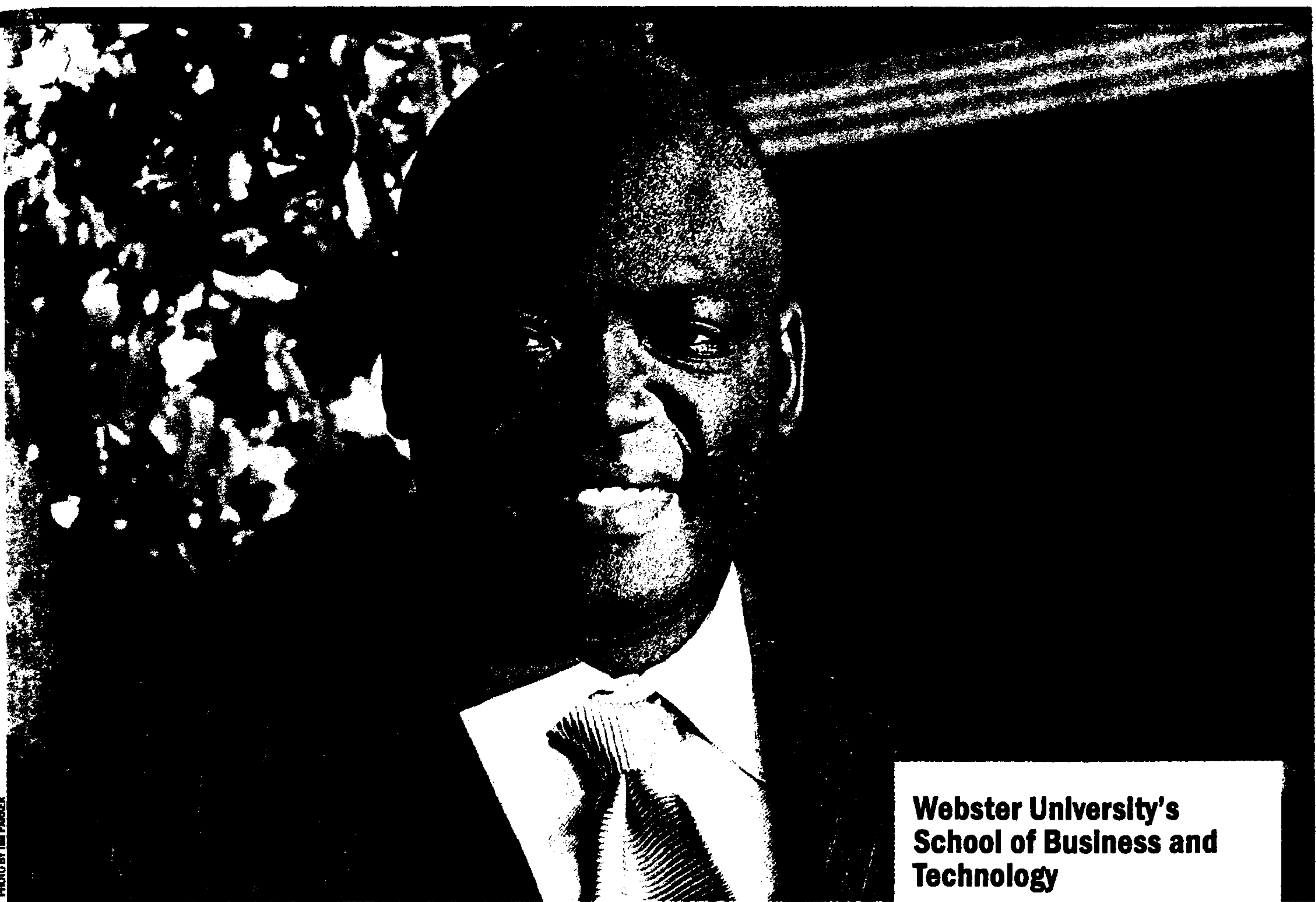
president and CEO of The Newberry Group, a consultant firm that just made the Fortune 500 tech firms list at No. 175.

Newberry's story of how she earned her master's from Webster sums up the university's appeal to many of its graduate students: accessibility and convenience for working adults.

"I've found that it (MBA) doesn't open doors, but it keeps doors from being closed to us."

— Brenda Newberry
CEO, The Newberry Group and
MBA graduate of Webster University

It is not surprising that Webster is once again ranked No. 1 in *Black Issues'* Top 100 Special Report for awarding master's degrees to African Americans and other minorities, who often are pursuing graduate education as working, older adults. In 1999-2000, the year covered by the latest data, Webster conferred a master's degree upon 890 African Americans



Dr. Benjamin Ola Akande, dean of the School of Business and Technology at Webster University in St. Louis, says the use of so many professionals as adjunct faculty members is the reason they have not sought accreditation from the AACSB.

— 491 in its business programs, and upon 1,197 total minorities — 681 in its business programs. It also placed No. 1 for awarding master's degrees in psychology to minorities and African Americans.

In the two decades since Newberry graduated, Webster has, in a sense, taken its show on the road. The flexible schedule that made it possible for Newberry to earn a degree now benefits 13,000 students in the College of Business and Technology. Webster's campuses literally span the globe with sites at more than 92 locations worldwide, according to President Richard Meyers' 2001-2002 message to students.

The promotional material does not exaggerate when it refers to Webster as "a worldwide network of campuses." Based in St. Louis on the campus founded by a Catholic nun in 1915, it has the visage of a normal century-old American university. But its conventional facade belies the university's strongest attraction: The main campus is merely the hub of a system that spans the globe with 68 satellite campuses in the United States, including

22 metropolitan campuses, 15 corporate sites and 31 military locations. It also has learning centers in Switzerland, Austria, the Netherlands, England, Bermuda, China and Thailand.

Founded in "a spirit of academic innovation" to educate young women in an era when it was a revolutionary concept, Webster continues its nontraditional mission today by taking graduate education to people who traditionally have been unable to attain it. It is what Dr. Benjamin Ola Akande, dean of the School of Business and Technology, describes as "reality-based education."

"Adults working full-time, juggling family life, children and school, have a right to graduate education, and the best time for them to get that education is in the evening and on weekends. So that's what we provide," Akande explains.

He says Webster's rise to becoming a top-degree granting institution for minorities is also because of its online offerings and, most significantly, the accessibility of its sites.

The result is "campuses" in an array of ur-

Webster University's School of Business and Technology

Graduate Programs

- Business
- Computer Resources and Information Management
- Finance
- Health Services Management
- International Business
- Management
- Marketing
- Master of Business Administration
- Public Administration

Tuition 2001-2002

- Undergraduate (full-time): \$6,860 per semester (Conservatory students \$8,360)
- Undergraduate (part-time): \$390 per credit hour, St. Louis
- Graduate (except MAT): \$398 per credit hour, St. Louis
- \$345 per credit hour, most nonmilitary campuses
- \$249 per credit hour, most military campuses.
- MAT: \$346 per credit hour

ban office buildings and military complexes — where minorities have easy access. “We are located at some of the largest military bases in the country, where people are trying to get an education while serving our nation,” Akande says. Some of the military students take classes at one base, get transferred, and complete their degrees on another military campus, perhaps in another part of the world.

‘FROM LEARNING TO DOING’

Strong PR notwithstanding, there are some notable, even stark, differences from traditional universities. The libraries at the satellite sites, for example, are virtually nonexistent. A combination of online databases and fully loaded computer labs serve as research centers. For those who insist on real literature, a quick-ship ordering system compensates to some degree for an ivy-covered edifice.

Students and faculty alike say it’s a minor adjustment.

Like its students, most of Webster’s business school faculty have other full-time jobs; many of them own or manage businesses, and, according to Akande, most have the terminal degree in their respective disciplines.

“It’s important to reduce the transition from learning to doing through use of practitioners who have terminal degrees and are able to bring to the classroom a fresh perspective on knowledge that will be useful in the workplace.”

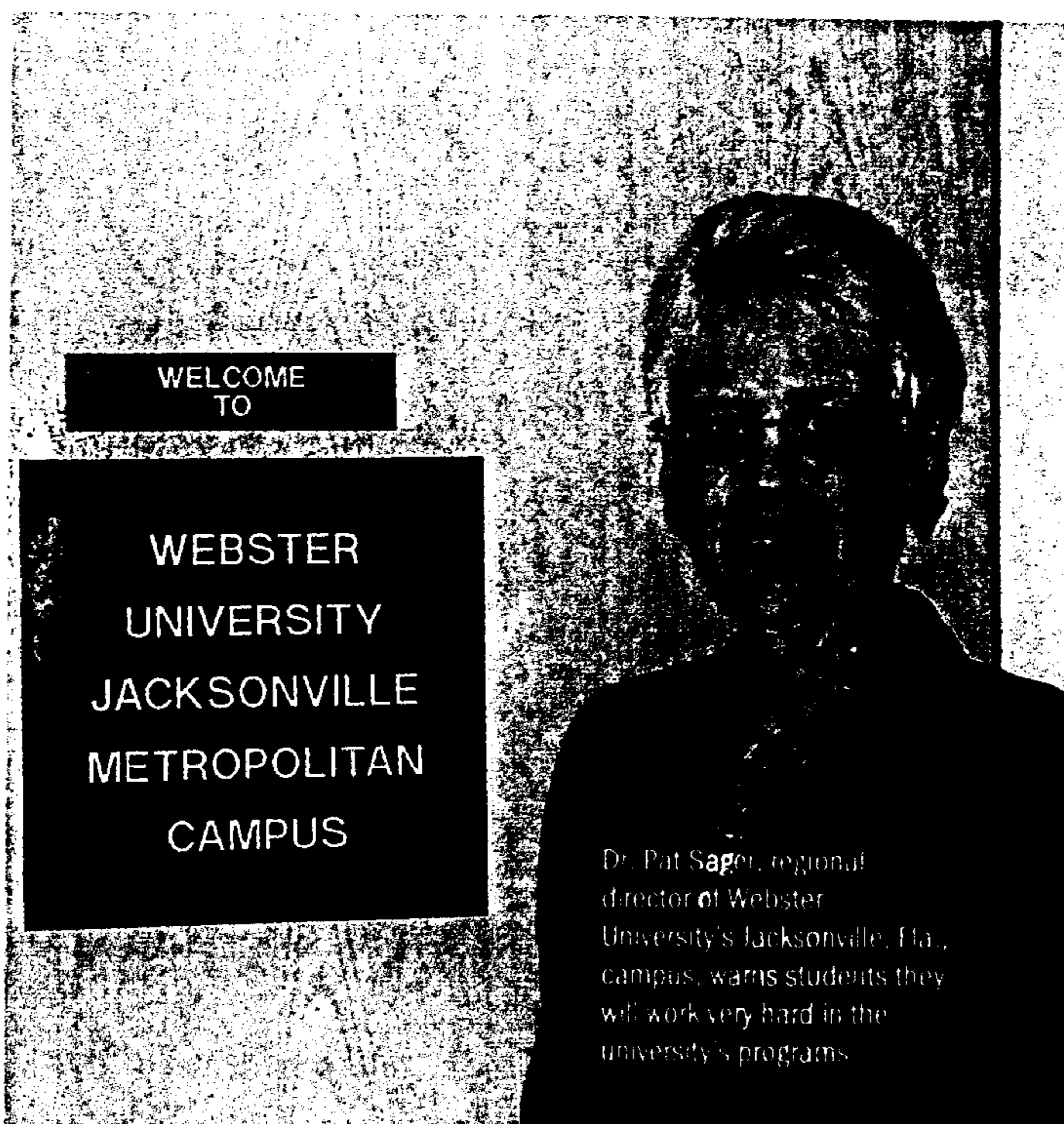
The mantra, “from learning to doing,” was repeated at least twice during a recent orientation for the fall master’s degree program at the Jacksonville metropolitan campus in North Florida. “Our mission is to condense very quickly your learning to doing,” Jay Bitner, an “area of concentration mentor,” told the new crop of students at the mandatory Sunday afternoon orientation meeting. Bitner teaches procurement and acquisitions management in the School of Business and Technology on the Jacksonville campus. He is also president of a security company.

When students were asked to introduce themselves and explain why they chose Webster, the most common responses were: “because Webster doesn’t require the GRE or GMAT,” and “because the classes are held at night and on weekends.”

The desire for practicality clearly outweighed the desire for academic rigor. Nevertheless, the faculty and administrators insist that Webster’s graduate courses are intense. At the Jacksonville orientation, regional director Dr. Pat Sager warned students, “You’re going to work real hard in our programs.”

One of the students at that meeting soon discovered that the lack of an entrance exam didn’t mean a lack of scholarship. When she was contacted a few weeks later, Isalene Montgomery said she was enjoying her studies — kind of.

“It’s a bit rigorous, yet still a pliable program,” says Montgomery, who works as a grants coordinator, adding that the program’s major



feature is its “reality-based” curriculum. “I can readily apply the case studies to what I experience on the job.”

She and other students credit the professionals on the faculty with making the studies applicable to the workplace.

THE ACCREDITATION DILEMMA

Akande says it is because of the use of so many professionals as adjunct faculty that Webster’s College of Business and Technology has not sought accreditation from the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB). The lack of accreditation for its business programs was a surprise to Newberry. “What? Well, isn’t Webster an accredited university?”

It turned out that many graduates and students weren’t aware

of the difference between institutional accreditation, which Webster has, and specialized accreditation, which it lacks. “It’s a big problem we have. The difference is not well understood,” says Milton Blood, managing director of accreditation services for AACSB. To make matters more confusing, AACSB offers memberships to universities that are not accredited by the association. He says Webster is one of those member institutions.

“A number of institutions market themselves as members, and many people think that means those institutions are accredited. We’re working on clearing that up,” Blood says. The voluntary accreditation process, which includes self-study and peer review “sends a very strong signal about the quality of a program to faculty and students,” Blood asserts. “Not having the accreditation doesn’t say anything one way or the other.”

Newberry says she still considers Webster’s graduate program strong, “but if I had known the difference, I may have chosen another school.” With an undergraduate degree from the University of Maryland, Newberry says she “just assumed” Webster’s College of Business and Technology had full accreditation. Webster’s recruitment literature states that it has institutional accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission and North Central Association, “which includes all undergraduate and graduate levels at all locations where the university offers programs.”

Newberry says none of her employers ever asked about her graduate school’s accreditation status. “In fact, they never really asked about the master’s,” she adds. Newberry considers her master’s a form of insurance that African Americans need. “I’ve found that it doesn’t open doors, but it keeps doors from being closed to us.”

For Ronald Coleman, who received his master’s in human resources management in 2000, and returned to complete another master’s in human resources development this year, the Webster experience has been “excellent for a person who is starting a business.” Retired after 23 years as a naval aviator, Coleman recently started a human resources consultant firm in the Jacksonville area. “I was a rookie, didn’t know a lot of things. My courses not only provided knowledge, they helped enhance what I already

knew so I could grow my business.”

For Coleman, the work was challenging, but not oppressive. In less than two years, he is leaving Webster with two graduate degrees. “Most people can’t do it in that time because of their jobs. I was lucky, I was able to set my own schedule.” An added convenience, he says, was that the same faculty teach at the Jacksonville metropolitan campus and the Navy base, so he could always get to his classes, even if he had business in the other part of town.

That’s the beauty of Webster’s programs, he says. “They’re very good about accommodating students.” ■

Bachelor Degree Candidates	Accounting	\$27,000-32,000
	Business Administration/Management	\$35,500-40,000
	Economics & Finance (Incl. Banking)	\$30,000-42,000
	Management Information Systems	\$33,000-42,000
	Marketing/Marketing Management	\$40,000-48,000
Master Degree Candidates	Accounting	\$29,000-37,500
	MBA Nontechnical Undergraduate Degree	\$37,500-42,000
	1 year or less experience	\$40,000-60,000
	1-2 years experience	\$48,000-67,000
	2-4 years experience	\$57,000-72,000
	More than 4 years experience	\$60,000-78,000
Associate Degree Candidates	Business (Includes accounting, finance, marketing, general business, and MIS)	\$24,500-29,000

SOURCE: NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND EMPLOYERS - JOBWEB - STARTING SALARY EXPECTATIONS - PAGE 1



2002-2003 NAEP Visiting Scholar, Postdoctoral Fellowship and Summer Internship Programs

The ETS AWARDS PROGRAMS are designed to provide scholars and students, at various stages of their careers, opportunities to carry out independent research projects under the mentorship of ETS senior researchers in a variety of fields. Fields include: statistics, psychometrics, psychology, teaching, learning, psycholinguistics, computational linguistics, minority issues, computer science, educational technology, policy research, literacy, testing issues including; alternate forms of assessment for special populations, and other new forms of assessment.

The goals of these programs are to provide research opportunities to scholars who currently hold a doctoral degree or to students who are currently enrolled in a doctoral program with an emphasis on the fields indicated above. In addition, the programs are designed to increase the number of women and minority professionals conducting research in educational measurement. Research is carried out at ETS in Princeton, New Jersey.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Visiting Scholar Program

A scholar will be selected to conduct independent research, using the NAEP database, with access to senior NAEP and other ETS staff in Princeton. The research should address important educational policy issues or measurement issues that affect the efficiency or usefulness of NAEP.

Award: 1 year. Stipend will be set in relation to the successful applicant’s compensation at the home institution. Limited relocation expenses will be reimbursed.

Application postmark deadline: **January 5, 2002**

The Postdoctoral Fellowship Program

Up to three individuals will be selected as fellows, and invited to conduct independent research described in a proposal submitted as part of the application process. Candidates must hold a doctoral degree.

Award: 1 year. Stipend: \$38,000. Limited relocation expenses will be reimbursed.

Application postmark deadline: **February 1, 2002**

Summer Program in Research for Graduate Students

Selected interns who participate in this program conduct research on a specific ETS project or program, chosen by the applicant, under the guidance of a senior staff member. Interns attend twice weekly seminars and workshops.

Award: 2 months. Stipend: \$4,000. Limited round-trip travel expenses will be reimbursed.

Application postmark deadline: **February 15, 2002**

Contact

For further information, contact the ETS Fellowship Program Administration Office at MS09-R, Educational Testing Service, Princeton, NJ 08541-0001, Telephone 609-734-5949 or 609-734-1806, Email: gmoreland@ets.org or ldelauro@ets.org.

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