



**BANKING DEMANDS LEADERSHIP.
GSB BUILDS LEADERS.**



THE GSB ENROLLMENT DEADLINE IS FAST APPROACHING

APPLY BY JUNE 1ST TO BE AMONG THE NEXT CLASS OF BANKING LEADERS

Celebrating 80 Years of Excellence

In 1945, a visionary partnership between Dr. Herbert V. Prochnow, the Dean of the University of Wisconsin's School of Commerce, and the Wisconsin Bankers Association laid the foundation for what would become one of the nation's leading graduate banking programs. Their efforts, supported by the Central States Conference of Bankers Associations, led to the creation of the Graduate School of Banking at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (GSB).

80 years later, we're proud to continue building on that legacy. At GSB, our flagship program offers a comprehensive curriculum designed to prepare mid- and upper-level managers

for leadership in today's rapidly evolving financial landscape. From strategic leadership and risk management to emerging technologies and regulatory change, we equip professionals with the tools they need to succeed and lead with confidence.

To date, more than 23,000 graduates—including financial leaders and regulatory experts from across the United States, the Caribbean, Europe, and beyond—have completed the program, leaving a lasting impact on the financial industry worldwide. As we celebrate this milestone anniversary, we remain committed to delivering excellence, fostering innovation, and shaping the future of financial education *together*. ■



CENTER FOR
PROFESSIONAL
& EXECUTIVE
DEVELOPMENT

TWO CREDENTIALS. ONE TUITION.

The Graduate School of Banking at the University of Wisconsin-Madison is more than an exceptional banking school; it's a powerful leadership development program. Students who complete the 25-month Graduate Banking School receive a Certificate of Executive Leadership from the Wisconsin School of Business's Center for Professional and Executive Development, in addition to a GSB diploma, at no additional cost. The Certificate of Executive Leadership, one of the most prestigious certificates available through the Wisconsin School of Business, showcases the rigor and depth of GSB's outstanding leadership curriculum. ■



Graduate School of Banking
at the University of Wisconsin – Madison

GSB ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT PROFILE:

CHRIS HINER'S PATH TO PURPOSE-DRIVEN LEADERSHIP



Chris Hiner
Regional President/
Director of
Home Lending,
Park National Bank,
Mansfield, OH

When economic uncertainty loomed and industries shifted, Chris Hiner didn't panic—he leaned in. It's a trait that's defined his career from the start: staying grounded through change, with a steady hand and an eye toward people.

Hiner joined Park National Bank in January 2006 as a fresh college graduate new to Newark, Ohio. He was guided by a sense of opportunity and valuable advice from his father: "Banking is stable." That took on new relevance when the Great Recession hit shortly after he began.

That period of adversity gave Hiner a real-world education and taught him the value of lifelong learning. Nearly 20 years later, now serving as a Regional President and Director of Home Lending, he credits those early years—and the people who invested in him—with shaping his approach to leadership: collaborative, open, and centered on purpose.

A Foundation Built by People

Hiner's first role was as a management associate, a position that gave him a clear view of the bank's operations. He rotated through commercial lending, retail, wealth, trust, and investments, gaining a well-rounded understanding of the bank's full scope.

"I was fortunate to have mentors who gave me room to learn by doing," Hiner reflects. "They didn't expect perfection—they expected effort, curiosity, and growth."

Key in his journey were Rob Springer, Vice President and Consumer Lending Director, and Cheryl Snyder, Chief Retail Officer of Park National Bank. Their guidance helped him understand not just how to manage people, but how to empower them.

"They were willing to challenge me, but also to listen. That combination made all the difference," he says. This early experience cemented his interest in the retail and wealth management sides of the business, areas where relationships and long-term impact matter deeply.

The GSB Experience: Clarity in Complexity

In 2008, Hiner enrolled in the Graduate School of Banking at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, just as the banking industry was navigating crisis. He was 25 years old and unsure of what to expect.

"GSB came at the right time for me," he says. "It pushed me intellectually, but also personally. I learned how to lead through complexity—and how to do it with empathy."



TOP: Chris with his wife Amy and children Maeley, Evan, and Beckett at Vista Village in Columbus, Ohio—a nonprofit tiny home community supporting individuals experiencing homelessness. The Hiner family helped build furniture for a Park National Bank-sponsored home.



BOTTOM: Left to right: Beckett, Amy, Maeley, Evan, and Chris during a family hike at Emerald Lake in Yoho National Park, British Columbia.

One of the most impactful takeaways was the concept of an outward mindset, which is defined as a way of thinking and acting that prioritizes understanding and empathy.

"It challenged me to look beyond myself and ask, 'How am I helping others succeed?' That really resonated," Hiner says. "You learn to see people as people, each with a unique history and aspirations for the future."

The timing of his GSB experience during the Great Recession also gave him a front-row seat to how banks around the country were managing real-time adversity. Some of his peers faced institution closures or extreme operational shifts. That shared challenge fostered lasting resilience and community. He also drew strength from the network of Park National Bank alumni who had gone through GSB before him and served as mentors throughout the program.

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GSB CYBERSECURITY SCHOOL — TOOLS TO PROTECT YOUR BANK

In an industry built on trust, a data breach is not just a technical failure, it's a risk to your business reputation. That's before the potentially staggering financial losses. According to a 2024 study by IBM, the average cost of a data breach in the financial sector is more than \$6 million per incident. Experts warn that there are only two kinds of financial institutions – those that have been targeted by criminals and those who will be. That's why bank leaders and cybersecurity professionals must address the threat with proactive measures that protect the bank and its customers. Done well, cybersecurity can be a competitive advantage, ensuring your organization remains secure and trusted in an increasingly competitive industry.

The GSB Cybersecurity School, to be held October 13-17 in Madison, Wisconsin, is a state-of-the-art program that's especially designed for information security officers in community banking. The curriculum includes an in-depth review of the business of banking to help ISOs develop a keen understanding of the key drivers of bank profitability, and takes a deep dive into the increasingly hostile threat landscape. Using a mix of lectures, small group discussion, and interactive computer labs, this school will provide the tools you need. Topics include:

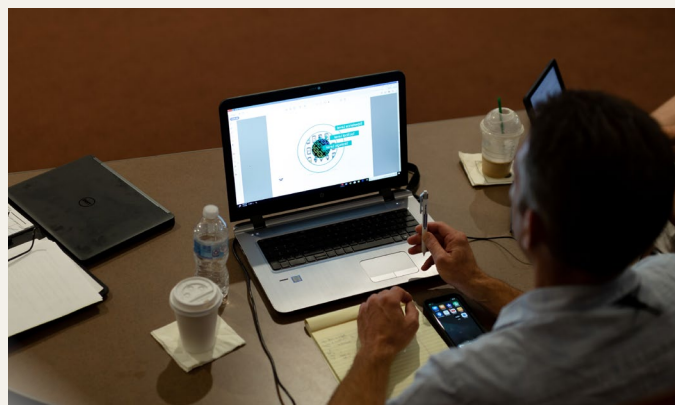
CYBERSECURITY CURRICULUM

- Security Breaches, Laws and Regulations
- Information Security Management
- Network Penetration/Testing and Ethical Web Hacking
- Digital Forensics
- Data Privacy Laws
- Cybercrime and the Dark Web

BUSINESS OF BANKING CURRICULUM

- Introduction to the Business of Banking
- Bank Profitability Analysis
- Asset/Liability Management
- Bank Regulatory & Competitive Environment
- Legal Issues Update
- Quantifying HR to the Bottom Line
- Steering Your Bank into the Future of Work
- Future Ready Workforce Panel Discussion

Space is limited – register early to guarantee your spot in this valuable program. ■



ENROLL TODAY AT [GSB.ORG](https://gsb.org)

FORMER CIA OFFICER & FBI SPECIAL AGENT TRACY WALDER TO BE KEYNOTE SPEAKER AT GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BANKING SESSION



Tracy Walder

Former CIA officer, FBI special agent, educator, and author

The Graduate School of Banking at the University of Wisconsin-Madison is excited to announce Tracy Walder, former CIA officer, FBI special agent, educator, and author, as the keynote speaker for the 2025 Distinguished Speaker Series at GSB's 80th annual session.

Having served in both the CIA's Directorate of Operations and as an FBI Special Agent, Walder brings a unique perspective on leadership in high-pressure environments. For banking professionals navigating a complex financial services landscape, Walder's insights gleaned from

extensive experience in national security, foreign affairs, and international policy, will be invaluable.

Walder is a best-selling author and currently works as an adjunct professor on criminal justice and terrorism. She inspires and

challenges audiences to embody a 'why not' approach to life and not let the question of 'why' dictate life choices.

"We are thrilled to welcome Tracy Walder as our keynote speaker," said Paul Katz, President and CEO of the Graduate School of Banking. "At its core, our mission is developing leaders who can profoundly impact their organizations and communities. Tracy will provide our students with critical perspectives on leadership, integrity, and resilience, which are essential qualities for success in today's banking environment."

Founded in 1945, the Graduate School of Banking is sponsored by state banking associations across the central United States, as well as the University of Wisconsin-Madison. It offers advanced study and research in banking, economics, and leadership. In addition to its flagship program, GSB provides specialized schools and online seminars that cater to banking professionals in areas including Human Resources, Technology, Information Security, Sales, Marketing, and Finance.

The enrollment deadline for the 2025 session is June 1. Space is limited and early applications are encouraged.

The Distinguished Speaker series is sponsored by the Federal Home Loan Banks of Chicago, Des Moines, and Cincinnati. ■

FINANCIAL MANAGERS SCHOOL FILLING QUICKLY – EARLY ENROLLMENT ENCOURAGED

Based on current enrollment, we anticipate the Financial Managers School, co-sponsored by GSB and the Financial Managers Society, will fill well ahead of its published deadline, resulting in a waitlist situation for the fifth consecutive year. This school, ideally suited for CFOs and other finance professionals in community institutions, will be held September 22-26 at the Fluno Center for Executive Education in Madison, Wisconsin. The week-long program is led by industry experts who have decades of real-world experience in capital planning, interest rate risk, liquidity management, asset/liability modeling, and more. Space is limited; we encourage students to enroll at their earliest opportunity, while seats remain. ■



...continued from page 2, "GSB Alumni Spotlight: Chris Hiner".

Leadership That Listens

Today, Hiner leads with a collaborative, transparent, and steady style.

"I've never been the loudest voice in the room," he says. "Leadership, to me, is about creating clarity, showing consistency, and empowering others to do their best work."

Hiner prefers to give direction and give his team autonomy in their work. His metaphor? "There's more than one way to eat a Reese's."

This flexible approach has proved essential during times of disruption. From the financial crisis to the COVID-19 pandemic, Hiner has led through uncertainty with empathy and calm.

"People remember how you made them feel," he reflects. "Being present, honest, and supportive goes a long way." He's also quick to note that leadership isn't about always having the answer. It's about staying true to your core values, especially when navigating the unknown.

Purpose Beyond the Office

Hiner sees community banking as more than a profession. He views his role as a conduit for good, bridging the needs of local businesses, nonprofits, and families with meaningful solutions.

For over a century, Park National Bank Ohio has remained steadfast in support of local initiatives. One organization Hiner proudly champions is Vista Village in Columbus, Ohio—a nonprofit that serves individuals experiencing homelessness through a tiny home village and an on-site community center offering wraparound services. Hiner doesn't just talk about support; he lives it. He recalls building furniture for a Park National Bank-sponsored tiny home, alongside his family.

"That's community banking at its finest. This isn't a profession, it's a lifestyle," Hiner shares. "We have a front-row seat to our communities' needs. Our role is to listen, engage, and be part of the solution."

That sense of purpose keeps Hiner grounded, even as the pace of change in banking accelerates.

"Technology and regulations will always evolve. But what stays the same is the importance of relationships, trust, and community connection," he says.

Wisdom for Rising Leaders

For those considering GSB or new to community banking, Hiner offers this advice: stay curious and stay grounded.

"Career growth isn't linear. You'll have setbacks. What matters is that you keep learning and surround yourself with people who challenge and support you," he says.

He encourages future GSB students to approach the program with intention.



TOP: Maeley (12), Evan (8), and Beckett (3) standing on the Continental Divide between Alberta and British Columbia, Canada, where two provinces and two national parks meet.

BOTTOM: The Hiner family at the National Bridge in Yoho National Park, surrounded by the natural beauty of the Canadian Rockies.

"It's not just about technical skills. It's about shaping the leader you want to be," he says. "GSB stretches you in ways that last well beyond graduation."

Whether mentoring new associates, guiding teams through change, or helping his community thrive, Hiner returns to one constant: leading with purpose and clarity.

"That's what makes this work meaningful," he says. "You get to help people grow. You get to make a difference." ■

GSB LEADERSHIP PANEL – RECORDING AVAILABLE

On April 30, four amazing GSB alumni joined us to share what they've learned in their esteemed careers. It was one of the most popular online programs in GSB history! Even if you missed it, you can still benefit from their leadership insights by registered for the free recording [HERE](#). Learn the powerful lessons these graduates shared about:

- The Power of Networking & Building Alliances
- The Value of Industry Engagement and Leadership
- Developing Your Personal Brand and Building Credibility
- The Future of Community Banking
- More!



Amber Van Til
Moderator

CEO, Indiana
Bankers Association



Betsy Johnson
Panelist

President & CEO,
Solutions Bank



Jill Castilla
Panelist

President & CEO,
Citizens Bank of Edmond



Julie Redfern
Panelist

Chief Banking Officer,
Lake Ridge Bank



ON DEMAND SEMINARS STILL AVAILABLE

The GSB Online Seminar Series offers recordings for 90 days after the completion of a program. Check out the array of Spring 2025 seminars still available for viewing at your convenience. ■

**EXPERTISE. CONVENIENCE.
THE INDUSTRY KNOWLEDGE
YOU NEED.**
