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

# SPRING AND SUMMER SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

**2026 Specialty Schools**

## DIGITAL BANKING SCHOOL

**March 3-26, 2026 | Half-day sessions, twice weekly**

This month-long virtual program gives every bank employee—with a single registration fee—practical tools to align strategy, build leadership, and thrive in the digital banking era.

## BANK TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT SCHOOL

**April 13–17, 2026**

Designed for information security officers and IT professionals, this school delivers actionable insights connecting emerging technologies with bank performance—driving profitability, strengthening security, and staying ahead of compliance.

## HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SCHOOL

**April 20–24, 2026**

Addressing HR's direct impact on the bottom line, this program focuses on key bank performance topics, including talent management, legal compliance, and profitability.

**Our Flagship Program**

## THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BANKING

**July 26–August 6, 2026**

Through innovative and engaging programming, the Graduate School of Banking is known for developing bank leaders. This cutting-edge advanced management program transforms banks and the communities they serve.

With a legacy rooted in excellence and innovation, GSB has earned its standing as the nation's leading banking school. GSB delivers a transformative curriculum that equips banking professionals with the tools, insights, and strategies to lead in an era of constant change.

At GSB, a powerful alliance of alumni, banker-advisors, and world-class faculty deliver a relevant, rigorous, and future-focused experience. This unique collaboration fuels a transformative educational journey while cultivating a lifelong professional network.

Graduates also receive the prestigious Certificate of Executive Leadership from the Wisconsin School of Business Center for Professional and Executive Development.

Learn more at gsb.org/legacy ■

## GSB ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT PROFILE

# MARGIE BURKHOLDER: SETTING THE STANDARD FOR LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

Margie Burkholder
*EVP/Chief Operations Officer, West Gate Bank, Lincoln, Nebraska*

### A Defined Mission

Margie Burkholder is on a mission to redefine what operational leadership looks like in banking. The EVP/Chief Operations Officer, West Gate, Lincoln, Nebraska, says she strives to position operational strategy as a driving force for purposeful transformation. She asserts that this means not only streamlining processes, but enabling bold shifts in how banks serve, protect, and connect with their customers.

"Too often, operations are seen as behind-the-scenes, but I believe they are the backbone of innovation and trust," she says. "Whether it's advancing digital capabilities, reinforcing risk resilience, or designing services that reflect the needs of our communities, I see operations as a platform for progress."

This combined passion for transformation, relationship building and community service makes Burkholder a natural for the industry. She emphasizes the importance of building relationships and helping others in their work.

"What I enjoy most is the dynamic nature of the banking industry—it's constantly evolving, and that creates space for meaningful leadership," she says.  "I love being part of an industry that touches nearly every aspect of people's lives, and I find purpose in helping shape how institutions respond to change, whether through technology, policy, or culture. There's something deeply fulfilling about building systems that not only work well but also serve people better."

### GSB as a Strategic Opportunity

A self-described lifelong learner, Burkholder credits that pursuit to helping her continually grow as a leader. This affinity made GSB the obvious choice for her for continuing education.

"I pursued the Graduate School of Banking program because I saw it as a strategic opportunity to grow as a leader in an industry that's constantly evolving," she says. "I wanted to deepen my understanding of the broader banking landscape, sharpen my decision-making, and gain insights I could apply directly to the challenges and opportunities we face in operations."

She adds that the program's depth and substance of the coursework, along with its real-world relevance, made it the right fit for where she wanted to take her career—and the impact she hopes to have.

The 2014 graduate credits the program with helping her grow into a more forward-thinking and well-rounded leader. "It gave me a broader view of the banking industry and helped me connect the dots between strategy, operations, and innovation," she says. "The experience strengthened my ability to lead with clarity, especially in times of change."

Burkholder says that because the program was incredibly actionable, she recalls being able to take what she was learning and immediately apply the knowledge at her bank.  "It was absolutely the catalyst for a foundational shift in how I lead and think strategically," she says. "The program challenged me to elevate my perspective, and that shift has influenced countless decisions and initiatives over the years."

Among the takeaways she also includes learning to approach banking from an enterprise-wide perspective.

"The concept that shifted my thinking most was the idea of strategic

*Above: Margie is pictured at a concert with her husband, Jason. Right: Margie and Jason at the VFW National Convention held in August 2025.*

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alignment across all functions—understanding how operations, risk, finance, and customer experience are interconnected and must move in sync to drive sustainable growth," she says. "It helped me move from thinking in silos to thinking systemically. That shift has influenced how I lead, how I collaborate across departments, and how I prioritize initiatives that create long-term value."

Beyond the comprehensive curriculum, Burkholder acknowledges that the peer network and relationships she's developed have been an incredible source of insight and support. When asked if she discovered anything about herself throughout the three years, she admits that while nothing new emerged, it reinforced to her that she loves a challenge. She earned her MBA while simultaneously completing GSB and working fulltime at West Gate Bank.

### A Trailblazer is Born

Burkholder's commitment to her industry, community service and professional growth has not gone unnoticed by her peers.

At its October 2025 Women in Banking conference, the Nebraska Bankers Association (NBA) presented Burkholder with the prestigious Alice Dittman Trailblazer Award for Women in Banking. According to the NBA, the award is named in honor of Alice Dittman, a trailblazing leader in Nebraska's banking and business communities, and recognizes a young, female banker who demonstrates exceptional leadership, professional achievement and community service.

Nominees are evaluated based on their impact within their bank, contributions to their community and commitment to the banking industry and the Nebraska Bankers Association.

### A Commitment to Service

For Burkholder support of the community does not end when her workday does. She and her husband, Jason, are dedicated and active supporters of several veterans' organizations, including the Department of Nebraska Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary, VFW Auxiliary #3606, and the American Legion Auxiliary Post #355.

As part of her Alice Dittman Trailblazer Award, she received $1,000 to be donated to a charity of her choice; she selected the Department of Nebraska Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary. ■

# AI INNOVATION SERIES

**December 8-12, 2025**
**Virtual, 2-hour sessions daily**
**New Program!**

Prepare your bank for the future of AI—today. The Graduate School of Banking's AI Innovation Series is a fully virtual, multi-day program built for banking leaders and professionals ready to unlock the potential of artificial intelligence. Over five days of expert-led sessions, you'll gain the frameworks, tools, and strategies to bring AI directly into your bank's operations, customer experience, compliance, workforce, and growth strategy. You'll leave with an AI roadmap tailored to your institution's needs.

**Bank-Wide Access. One Flat Fee.**

For one flat registration fee of $1,950, your entire bank gains access to this transformational learning experience. Enjoy a 20% discount if your organization sent an employee to GSB or a specialty school in 2024 or 2025. ■

## NEW LEADERSHIP APPOINTMENTS

# GSB-WISCONSIN EXPANDS LEADERSHIP TEAM WITH ELIZABETH FOSTE AND MELISSA HASTINGS

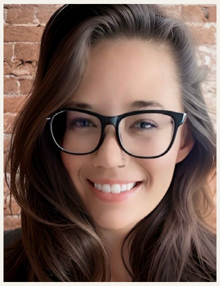
Elizabeth Foste
*Vice President of Alumni Engagement and Business, GSB-Wisconsin*

The Graduate School of Banking at the University of Wisconsin- Madison, consistently ranked among the nation's top banking schools, is pleased to welcome Elizabeth Foste to the newly created role of Vice President of Alumni Engagement and Business Development.

Drawing on her vast experience in higher education and professional development, Foste will play a key role in galvanizing alumni, growing enrollment, and strengthening the value of the GSB experience. Foste joins GSB from the University of Wisconsin-Madison where, as the Economics Career and Outreach Director, she developed and led initiatives to increase alumni affinity and industry engagement within the Department of Economics and the Wisconsin School of Business.

"Elizabeth's experience is an outstanding fit for GSB," said Paul C. Katz, GSB President and CEO. "That said, I'm even more excited about her energy, attitude, and the dynamic impact she'll have on an outstanding team that is already producing at a high level. She embodies the values that will reflect—and further enrich—GSB's team-driven culture."

"I have been blown away with the genuine enthusiasm and passion that our alums have for their Graduate School of Banking," said Foste. "I have enjoyed getting to know our alumni and listening to their GSB experience. With all their passion and enthusiasm, there is just so much opportunity for growth here. I am eager to start building on that with programming and initiatives that connect our alumni in meaningful ways." ■



Melissa Hastings
*Learning Innovation and Faculty Engagement Manager, GSB-Wisconsin*

The Graduate School of Banking at the University of Wisconsin- Madison, consistently ranked among the nation's top banking schools, is pleased to welcome Melissa Hastings as Learning Innovation and Faculty Engagement Manager.

In this newly created role, Hastings will collaborate with the Vice President of Learning Strategy and Innovation, GSB faculty, and subject matter experts to design engaging, outcomes-based courses that align with GSB's strategic initiatives, mission, and vision.

Joining GSB from Wisconsin School of Business Center for Professional and Executive Development (CPED), Madison, Wisconsin, where she was Senior Instructional Designer, Hastings brings a strong background in designing, developing and delivering innovative, engaging, and learner-centered blended and online learning solutions.

"Melissa brings the insight, expertise, and collaborative spirit essential to advancing our innovation initiatives," said Paul C. Katz, GSB President and CEO. "Her work will play a key role in transforming how we deliver learning experiences and support our faculty, helping us prepare the next generation of bank leaders."

"Joining GSB is an exciting opportunity to help reimagine how learning connects with today's professionals," said Hastings. "I'm passionate about using innovation to make education both meaningful and practical. I look forward to serving as a trusted partner and resource for GSB faculty, collaborating as a creative and strategic thought partner to bring new energy to course development and learner engagement across the organization. My goal is to bridge creativity and strategy to design learning experiences that connect and inspire." ■

*Founded in 1945, the Graduate School of Banking at UW-Madison is sponsored by state banking associations across the central United States and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. In addition to its flagship Graduate School of Banking program, GSB offers specialty schools in Human Resources, Technology, Cybersecurity, Finance, and Digital Banking — as well as online seminars covering all areas of bank management.*

## GRATEFUL FOR OUR GSB COMMUNITY

As we celebrate Thanksgiving, we're especially grateful for the bankers, alumni, and partners who make up the GSB community. Our 80-year legacy of excellence is only possible because of your dedication, support, and belief in the power of lifelong learning. Thank you for being part of the GSB family. ■