



**MONDAY MORNING MEMO**  
*from Dean Avi Mukherjee*

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Brad D. Smith Schools of Business host inaugural CEO panel with Silicon Valley business leaders

**Marshall University**  
**Lewis College of Business & Brad D. Smith Schools of Business**

*Dean's Distinguished Speaker Series presents the inaugural*

**CEO PANEL**



**Brad D. Smith**  
 Executive Chairman  
 & Fmr. President & CEO  
 Intuit



**Shantanu Narayen**  
 Chairman, President & CEO  
 Adobe



**Daniel Schulman**  
 President & CEO  
 PayPal



The Brad D. Smith Schools of Business and its Dean’s Distinguished Speaker Series at Marshall University, hosted the Inaugural CEO Panel, sponsored by Mountain Health Network, on February 19, 2020, at the historic and majestic Keith Albee Performing Arts Center. Thanks to our speakers and panel members, students, alumni, faculty, staff, community members, business leaders, government officials, university administrators, and board members for joining us for this highly engaging panel discussion. Brad D. Smith joined guest panelists Shantanu Narayen, Chairman, President and CEO of Adobe, and Daniel Schulman, President and CEO of PayPal, onstage. Three CEOs, former and current, of world-renowned corporations shared their advice, answered questions and even accepted an audience member’s resume during the inaugural CEO panel. Over 1,800 people packed the historic Keith Albee Performing Arts Center to hear insights and advice from three of the world’s top CEOs.

The Lewis College of Business, celebrating its 50th anniversary, offers contemporary, cutting edge, and applied business education and research while being rooted in the region’s economic and business development. Reimagined by a transformational gift by Brad and Alys Smith in 2018, the Brad D. Smith Schools of Business have identified experiential learning as the DNA of our academic programs in business. The Dean’s Distinguished Speaker Series was started recently as the highest profile speaker series of the Brad D. Smith Schools



of Business, offering a rich and vibrant experience to our students and various other stakeholders as they learn from renowned c-suite executives, entrepreneurs, intrapreneurs, and industry leaders about business successes, effective leadership and the future of work. As a part of this series, the inaugural CEO Panel brought these three top-tier business leaders to Huntington to provide insightful perspectives through dynamic discussions covering a broad range of topics that influence the world of business and bring powerful lessons from the boardroom to the classroom. These CEOs are internationally respected business leaders who have an excellent reputation and a powerful story to tell.

The theme of the panel discussion was "Powering Possibilities." Talent is dispersed equally, but opportunity is not. Rapid technological, environmental and societal shifts are changing the rules of how emerging talent can seize economic opportunities in communities across the globe. In this panel discussion, our stakeholders will hear from these industry leaders as they discuss the skills and mindsets needed to succeed in today's economic landscape. Together, communities, corporations and academia can shape the world for future



generations to thrive.

"I believe this moment in time represents a crossroad," said Smith, who served as the panel moderator. "It's an intersection between our historical accomplishments and our future possibilities, possibilities for each and every one of us as individuals, possibilities for Marshall, WVU, the other state universities and colleges and the students that they teach, and possibilities for this great state of West Virginia." Smith said as proud as he is of West Virginia's accomplishments, he believes the time has come for change.

"It's time for us to reimagine and transform ourselves, and in doing so prepare the next generation for the world they are about to inherit," he said. "The world we are living in now is rapidly evolving. While new technologies bring magic to our lives in ways we couldn't imagine just 10 years ago, they also bring change and disruption of jobs and of industry. They also accelerate the pace of change 10 times faster than we were experiencing just a decade ago," he said. "That is an amazing and yet somewhat concerning future."

Smith said we are facing something called the 75% reality. "The 75% reality is the digital generation right now ... 75% of them actually want to own their own businesses," he explained. "They want to start their own company. They don't want to go to work for another company." Smith said the second 75% reality is that 75% of all new jobs around the world are created by small businesses and startups. "The third 75% reality is that 75% of venture capital money went to three places — California, New York and Massachusetts," Smith said. "We are here to change that in West Virginia."

Smith said there are bright spots all around West Virginia. "Our policymakers on a federal and state level are shaping policy that evens the playing field so we can participate," he said. Smith said there are also exciting things happening with companies in the state. "You have tech companies like Infor coming to Charleston, you have Core10 teaching coding skills and you have my own company, Intuit, opening up a prosperity hub in Bluefield and creating hundreds of jobs," he said. "We have our work cut out for us, but I stand before you today as an optimist."

Smith said he sees two trails to the future for West Virginia. "Education and entrepreneurship," he said. "They are the great equalizers that level the playing field and transform tough realities into amazing possibilities. This is an example today of what Marshall, WVU and other schools are doing by bringing world-class leaders into our state, learning from their insights and experiences and helping us figure out how we can expose our talent to them so they know where great talent resides ... right here in West Virginia."

Narayan said he believes Silicon Valley became such an unbelievable place for business because of education. "I think investing in talent is vital," he said. "Everybody asks why are we not starting a company here or starting an office here, but the truth is that we go where the talent is, so there is nothing more important than education and investing in the workforce. The truth is we allow the best people to work from wherever they want. The reality is that anywhere you go in the world right now, with a computer, you have access to capital. Access to capital is actually not the big differentiator. The big differentiator is access to talent. Get that next generation of talent, and that's where every single company will go."



Schulman said the talent you need depends on the position, but companies are looking for all types of talent. “Everyone thinks all the tech companies are only looking for software engineers, but we look for people who are excellent in finance, in operations, in marketing and sales and customer operations,” he said. “Location is becoming increasingly less important. That is also becoming a great equalizer as well, because people can work remotely today because of all of the new technologies to do your job.”

Schulman said there are very few people who actually know what they are going to be doing 10 years from now, so he advises job seekers and entrepreneurs to just take the next step and learn from it. “Whatever that next job is, there are going to be some really bad experiences and some great ones,” he said. “What you really like doing, you will excel at, and things you hate doing, you probably are going to do well. The only way to do that is through experience and taking that first step.”

John Donahoe, CEO of Nike, was scheduled to participate in Wednesday’s panel but was unable to attend. He sent in a video clip following in the themes of the panel. “We all deeply admire current and future leaders like yourself that exhibit the grit, perseverance and determination that it takes to lead,” Donahoe said in the video.

U.S. Senators Shelley Moore Capito and Joe Manchin, WV Senate President Mitch Carmichael, Secretary of State Matt Warner and Representative Carol Miller, as well as Huntington Mayor Steve Williams and WVU President Gordon Gee, attended the event and were recognized by President Jerry Gilbert.

The event concluded with panel members receiving gifts from the Lewis College of Business. Thank you for supporting the Distinguished Speaker Series at Marshall University as we strive to create impact, innovation and engagement for business and business education in our Mountain State.

The video for the event is available at:

[https://livestream.com/marshallu/events/9004912?origin=stream\\_live&mixpanel\\_id=f1f424eb2763a-0ea4af84d-43681f0a-2ee000-f1f424eb28bf1&acc\\_id=25007907&medium=email](https://livestream.com/marshallu/events/9004912?origin=stream_live&mixpanel_id=f1f424eb2763a-0ea4af84d-43681f0a-2ee000-f1f424eb28bf1&acc_id=25007907&medium=email)

Here are some media coverage:

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/top-business-executives-visit-huntington-to-share-insight/ar-BB10aMLk?ocid=st2>

<https://www.wowktv.com/news/west-virginia/marshall-hosts-ceo-panel-with-business-executives/>

<https://marshallparthenon.com/24919/news/24919/>

[https://www.herald-dispatch.com/news/three-of-world-s-top-ceos-offer-insight-to-success/article\\_6e9ebb9f-0287-5544-9388-eaf1d3f780b4.html](https://www.herald-dispatch.com/news/three-of-world-s-top-ceos-offer-insight-to-success/article_6e9ebb9f-0287-5544-9388-eaf1d3f780b4.html)

<https://www.wsaz.com/content/news/Top-business-executives-visit-Huntington-to-share-their-expertise-568015411.html>

<https://www.wowktv.com/news/west-virginia/marshall-hosts-ceo-panel-with-business-executives/>