Nurturing and helping things grow is what David excels at, be it exotic species of koi and timber, his current passion, or undergraduate finance students. I cannot think of anyone else in the department or indeed the Kelley School of Business who has had such a lasting impact on so many generations of undergraduate students. The available data show that since 2005, over 7,000 students have felt his influence! He has single-handedly made the Kelley School a beacon for the highest quality undergraduate applicants seeking careers in the financial industry by shaping a program that is the envy of elite business schools. And in perhaps the most remarkable innovation, he has instituted a series of initiatives to carry his mentorship and teaching environment beyond students’ graduation.

David has achieved signal recognition for the Kelley School with his development of the Investment Banking Workshop (IBW) and Investment Banking Network (IBN), an intellectually rigorous, programmatic sequence of courses and activities to prepare students who wish to begin their professional careers working in the corporate finance function of investment banking firms. Undeterred by location and the incumbent advantages of established schools, he set himself a seemingly unattainable goal and succeeded. Solely because of his activities, the number of investment banks interested in Kelley students has skyrocketed from a paltry two to as many as 60! He now routinely places over 75 students each year in highly competitive investment banking internships and a similar number in full-time positions, something that only one or two better-endowed Ivy League schools can match. As a result, over 800 Kelley students have established themselves successfully in the financial industry since his first graduating class in 2004. The acknowledgment by his students and their parents of his transformative legacy is palpably clear to any witness to his graduation events.

This success, recognized by as many as 12 different and highly sought-after teaching awards, reflects the innovation and effectiveness of the pedagogy that David employs in his classes. He simply does not believe in a one-way transfer of knowledge but harnesses the experiences of his students to foster a culture where learning occurs in multiple directions. He makes teachers of all his students. An example of this is his creative melding of graduate and undergraduate students in his banking program. His creation of collaborative work groups where everyone is both a teacher and a learner benefits the undergraduate students by exposing them to the leadership and mentoring of the graduate students. At the same time, the graduate students, in working with the undergraduates, get to develop their leadership and motivational skills in a manner exactly mimicking the team culture and assignment of professional responsibilities in financial companies.

Another hallmark of his teaching style is his extensive utilization of alumni (upwards of 60) from industry to enrich his classes. A particular innovation of his is to use these alumni in “Super Friday” sessions—daylong events focused on the different aspects of the business of investment banking. This approach serves the dual purpose of bringing leading-edge practice and verisimilitude into the classroom while simultaneously fostering the growth of the students in multiple dimensions. Student growth occurs through one-on-one mentoring sessions with the visiting practitioners and through the detailed self-reflection demanded of the students. David uses such opportunities not only to engage in discipline-based teaching but to foster ancillary skills essential to success—leadership, communication and persuasion, work ethic, integrity, and professionalism. He has also recently extended his reach by crafting a finance diversity program to engage and develop students not historically represented in the financial industry.

While David’s classroom innovations and effectiveness are outstanding by any norm, the contribution that catapults him to a league of his own is the extension of his teaching connection with students beyond graduation. His creation of an investment banking network provides a cohesive forum for over 800 alumni of his program at various stages of their careers. This network provides a mutual support system that encourages long-term loyalty and fosters a sense of community among Kelley alumni working in the financial industry. Of much greater import is the continued growth and development that the network enables for the alumni. Graduates help each other develop their human capital through formal and informal workshops and mentoring and help younger alumni make successful career transitions. This network is indicative of the manner in which David views his charge: not just as a temporary commercial transaction during students’ four-year sojourn here, but as a continuing relationship in which he and the school remain vested in students’ growth and success. In doing this, David has broken the normal classroom boundary and extended it far into his graduates’ professional careers. His unparalleled commitment to the development of his students’ full potential marks him out as a teacher of the highest order.

David is hanging up his classroom hat to pursue his many entrepreneurial interests, including the aquaculture of exotic species, forestry, and the financing of innovative business ideas. However, we hope and anticipate that his long association with IU—starting as an adjunct lecturer in 1992 after receiving his B.S. in Business in 1983 and his J.D. and M.B.A. in 1986, all from IU—will continue in other ways. With his growth DNA, that association can only redound to the benefit of the Kelley community.

Sreenivas Kamma