Industry experts program offers real-world, real-time career guidance

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Freeman School Industry Expert-in-Residence Duane Schrader, right, former power and natural gas trading manager at LG&E and KU Energy, listens to sophomore Zach Turbin (BSM '26) during a meeting in the Goldring/Woldenberg Business Complex.

From automation and analytics to AI and ESG, the business world is changing at breathtaking speed, and students increasingly need industry-specific insights to make the most of job opportunities.

To help students get the insider's perspective they're seeking, the Freeman School's Career Management Center launched the Industry Experts-in-Residence program, a new initiative that connects students with senior industry professionals to help them fine-tune their career planning and navigate the complexities of the recruiting process.

Established in 2023, the program leverages Freeman's extensive corporate connections and vast alumni network to provide students with area-specific and industry-specific knowledge. The experts bring decades of experience to the program, offering students a practical, no-nonsense view of industry norms, trends and opportunities. They also act as mentors, providing students with consultation and advice through virtual or in-person office hours, small group sessions, networking events and practice interviews.

The program currently features eight experts drawn from fields including consulting, finance, marketing, real estate and energy.

"Most of our experts have 20 or more years of experience in their industries," says Carla Coury, executive director of the Career Management Center. "They can offer students an inside track on how to navigate the nuances of particular industries — such as investment banking or energy — or help students make connections in targeted firms."

Industry expert Edwin Bragg (TC '95), for example, advises students seeking marketing jobs to find out how their target firms are incorporating artificial intelligence into their operations.

"AI is of course affecting the way every company works across all aspects of business," says Bragg, founder of Bragg Marketing. "When interviewing, a student should ask how that company and the team they'll be a part of is working with AI in their respective roles.

"Career searching takes a lot of hard work, good timing and good luck," Bragg adds, "but with nearly every connection a student makes, they will learn something new or it will lead to something else."

In addition to Bragg, this year's Industry Experts in Residence include Dan Brouillette (MBA '25), president of Sempra Infrastructure and former U.S. Secretary of Energy; Eric Dusansky, founder of Inflection Partners; Brett Freimauer (A&S '92), managing director of financial services at EY; David Gardner (MBA '91), principal and managing director of Ronin Solutions and former chief information officer of AIG; Duane Schrader, former power and natural gas trading manager at LG&E and KU Energy; Mike Strug (TC '94), vice president of Blackrock; and Bouvier Williams (MBA '93), AVP and head of organizational development and change at Beth Israel Lahey Health.

Learn more about the Industry Experts-in-Residence Program (IEIR), visit https://freeman.tulane.edu/careers/students/industry-experts-residence-program. You can also learn about other mentoring and advising opportunities at https://freeman.tulane.edu/careers.