Force named Director of Schwartz Family Center for Experiential Business Learning

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Tulane University's Freeman School of Business has named Mara Baumgarten Force as inaugural director of the Schwartz Family Center for Experiential Business Learning, the school's new center of excellence dedicated to high-impact hands-on learning.

In this new position, Force, who currently serves as the Seymour S Goodman Professor of Business Administration and professor of practice in finance, will take on the additional role of expanding and enhancing experiential learning efforts at the Freeman School, including developing and managing student projects with corporate

partners that enhance learning, teaching undergraduate and graduate courses that focus on experiential learning, and participating in service to the university and the business school.

“I am passionate about experiential learning and giving our students a valuable educational experience that they can showcase to future employers,” said Force. “At Freeman, we strive to create an environment in which students gain knowledge and experience, as well as pride and confidence, by applying the skills they learn in the classroom to real-world projects.”

“The Freeman School has long been known for outstanding experiential learning programs,” added Paulo Goes, dean of the Freeman School. “With the creation of the Schwartz Family Center for Experiential Business Learning, we plan to dramatically expand these valuable learning opportunities for our students, and I can’t think of a better person to lead this important effort for us than Mara.”

Before joining the Freeman School in 2017, Force served as a managing director and head of Private Client Trust at JPMorgan. During her 18 years with the firm, she served in a variety of positions in the Asset Management and Investment Banking lines of business. Her responsibilities ranged from highly technical, including investing the bank’s capital in hedge funds and structuring equity derivatives, to managerial, including overseeing 150 Private Client Trust officers servicing more than 13,000 clients.

Force holds a Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Political Science from Yale University and an MBA, with a major in Analytical Finance, from Northwestern University’s Kellogg School of Management.

The Schwartz Family Center will play a crucial role in streamlining academic operations at Freeman. As described by Force, the center will function as the “oil that greases the wheels” of experiential learning, underscoring its role as a hub for information and resources. Beyond serving faculty, the center will provide support and coordination across various departments within the Freeman School, including Corporate Relations, Career Management and Advancement. By facilitating collaboration among these critical areas, the Schwartz Family Center will enhance efficiency and effectiveness throughout the business school.

“Experiential learning requires a lot of logistical support compared to a standard lecture course,” Force said. “Bringing in guest speakers and mentors and facilitating

large partnership projects can be extremely time-consuming, so being able to provide that framework and resource support will allow our educational process to flow smoother and better.”

As director of the center, Force said she hopes to actively engage stakeholders in shaping students’ educational experiences.

“The overarching vision I have for the Schwartz Family Center is to be part of a virtuous cycle,” said Force. “The cycle begins with students gaining valuable hands-on experience that, in turn, leads to successful career outcomes. These positive results can then generate additional opportunities for experiential learning and attract dynamic, high-achieving students, creating a self-reinforcing loop of growth and development.”