

Max was invited to speak with a group of students in the Seidman College of Business as a wrap-up and celebration of our senior students who were part of our student organizations. Present were a variety of students from the various organizations and from all levels of their academic career. Also in attendance were several faculty, as well as students and professionals who participate in the Seidman Mentorship Program. I asked Max if he was able to spend some time with this group to send off our seniors with a message of hope and resiliency. I could not think of a better person to relay this message. During his hour or so talk with us Max was riveting! I always enjoy speaking with him but hadn't had the pleasure of hearing him "speak" to an audience. Max is polished, poised and personable in his presentation. It was clear to me that during his discussion that all of the participants were fully engaged! The evidence of this was during Q and A. The students had such amazing questions for Max about his time as a student as well as his segue to the professional world, in spite of his health challenges. In addition, many stayed after to talk further with him individually. I learned recently that many of LinkedIn with Max since that event.

The message of resiliency was one important part of Max's message. I believe the message of this attribute coupled with that of humility were both strong and impactful to these young professionals.

Max doesn't miss a beat in his delivery. He scans the audience and picks up cues. In addition, as one student observed and asked about..."how did you learn to speak like that and not have a single "um" in your delivery?" Max had a very impactful answer to this question that entailed intentionality, listening to mentors, and practicing!!!

Students are still coming up to me weeks later to share how impressed they were with Max and his story as well as the message he conveyed. He has an open invitation in the Seidman College forever!

I have always felt that knowing Max has been a blessing; yet the real blessing is being able to share him with others.

Joy Gianakura Allen, EdD
Associate Dean, Seidman College of Business

Kind Regards,

Joy Gianakura, EdD

**Associate Dean
Seidman College of Business**

Phone: 616-331-7500

Web: www.gvsu.edu/seidman/undergraduateprograms

Email: gianakuj@gvsu.edu

50 Front Ave. SW, Grand Rapids, MI 49504