

# The College of Business

## Students Drive Small Business Innovation

**C**had Lemos '08 has taken his calculator out of the classroom and into the field.

With a team of other students from The College of Business, Lemos, an accounting major, co-authored a plan to revitalize New Haven's struggling West River neighborhood. Once a vibrant area, West River lost its core when buildings and businesses were razed to accommodate a highway that was never built. Lemos and his team advised adding a bed-and-breakfast inn, small businesses and housing to bring in homeowners, tourists and retailers. He also helped coordinate a Small Business Day at Hill Regional Career High School in New Haven as part of the West River project.

"We wanted to get the people of the community out to learn about small business: how to start a small business and how to keep a small business running," Lemos says. "The feedback I heard was that people really enjoyed it, and that they were happy the University cared about them and wanted to revitalize the area. We were trying to help West River as much as we could."

Lemos' work was part of the University's Small Business Institute, one of The College of Business' nine Centers of Excellence. The centers promote interaction between students and the community, for the betterment of both.

Run by Dr. Tony Carter, a professor of Management at UNH, the Small Business Institute has lofty goals. Among them: pursuing financial support for local entrepreneurs, and identifying and cultivating local African-Americans who are interested in entrepreneurship and small-business opportunities.

"The Small Business Institute is about outreach," Dr. Carter says. "It targets young people, who are the linchpin for any general economic development."

"It particularly strives to reach young people of color," he says. "The West River neighborhood comprises sixth-five percent African-Americans, but only eight percent of the businesses are owned and operated by African-Americans," Dr. Carter says. "One of the primary goals in the revitalization plan is the development of a pool of African-American entrepreneurs to seek new or

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**Management Professor Dr. Tony Carter runs the Small Business Institute**

existing business opportunities in the West River Neighborhood Revitalization Zone."

For Lemos, enthusiastic as he was to help the neighborhood, he also saw a direct benefit to his own future. "Just being involved with it—and with the residents—gave me a feel for what it will be like to work with people in the real world," he says. ♦