Rob Pettit (MBA ’25)

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Name: Rob Pettit

Hometown: New Orleans, Louisiana

Program: Executive MBA

Concentration: Finance

Favorite Business Course: Finance I and II. I know it’s not one course, but they built on each other and changed the direction of my time at Freeman. I was planning

on taking the management track when I started the program. Finance was not where I thought my interests would lead me. I work in corporate communications for Entergy, the only Fortune 500 company headquartered in Louisiana. I'm a professional "words" man who had never taken a finance course before this program. Having spent seven years listening to quarterly earnings calls and supporting company executives, I always felt there was a "language barrier" for me. Our professors, Bill Reese and Myke Yest, taught me the language of business that had eluded me for so long. After their courses, I now understand the fundamentals of our company in a way I hadn't appreciated before. And for me, that was certainly worth the cost of admission.

Favorite Business Professor: It's so hard to choose. I was impressed with how much each professor could teach us in three weekends. For me, the professors who stood out were those who not only had a command of their material but could also truly teach students. After completing this program, I firmly believe that teaching is an art we don't appreciate enough. Russ Robbins taught us statistics with both spreadsheets and random objects from his pockets. Ron Dulek taught me to squeeze the juice out of every experience. I still refer to his communications wheel of style (it sits on my desk), and he gave me the most memorable nickel I've ever received. Finally, Rita Kosnik taught me to find the answer to "Why?" in my negotiations. For that, I'll always be thankful.

Most important thing you learned at Freeman: There's so much to learn, and you can learn it. The course load is challenging; you will be tested and stretched by what you are asked to do, but it is manageable. I had one professor give my group feedback on questions we had missed on a project that really stuck with me. He said, "If you're getting everything right, why are you here? That means you already know this. The point is you're here to learn, and when you miss something in this class, it's ok. It's a low-risk environment." And he was right. At work, you've got to deliver on what you're doing, and if you don't, there are consequences.

It was so energizing to have that freedom to "fail up" and explore areas that would have otherwise intimidated me. As a professional communicator, I chose to focus on finance because I knew this was a safe environment where I could explore a topic of interest that was outside of my wheelhouse zone.

Favorite New Orleans Memory: My husband and I are New Orleans transplants, but this town has welcomed us with a big, warm (and humid) hug. One of my favorite things to do in the city is try out new restaurants. There are so many

different options thanks to New Orleans blending pot of cultures, and they always deliver on taste and experience. We started a list of restaurants to try when we moved here three years ago, and the list keeps growing.