From foreign exchange student to international business success, John Karakadas, BBA ’82, has tried to be fearless when attacking problems and finding solutions. Now he’s helping Kent State prepare business students with the skills to succeed in an ever-changing world.

BY LISA ABRAHAM

With a storied career in international business, John Karakadas, BBA ’82, has returned to Kent State University to serve on the National Advisory Board to the Ambassador Crawford College of Business and Entrepreneurship.

Karakadas is founder and managing partner of Aesion LLC, a Greenwich, Connecticut-based advisory and principal investment firm. He has served on the advisory board to the Ambassador Crawford College’s new building.

Karakadas has always tried to be fearless when attacking problems and finding solutions—and he believes that even without experience in any specific business sector, those skills always will generate a successful outcome.

He advises current business students to prepare for a journey of continuous learning improvement. “Keep your skills up to date in the ever-evolving environment,” he says. “The most notable change that has taken place in business over the past 30 years is the speed of change. Preparing oneself and arming oneself with an attitude of continuous learning and continuous self-improvement is the only way to keep up with the ever-increasing rate of change.”

“At Kent State, Karakadas says he was profoundly inspired by the words of then-President Brage Golding, who spoke at his 1982 commencement. Golding told the graduates that no matter what they do—and universities are the premiere training ground—to contribute to their community at large is very much worthwhile.”

Karakadas considered the SingularLogic restructuring his greatest success: Even though he had no experience in tech, his leadership skills enabled him to unite his employees and get the company back on track.

From 2005 to 2011, he led the restructuring of SingularLogic, the leading software vendor and information technology services company in southeastern Europe, as its chair and CEO. In 2011, as executive chair of the board of directors of Olympic Air, he led the successful turnaround of Greece’s flagship carrier.

Karakadas says he is looking forward to his service on the advisory board.

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At Kent State, Karakadas says he was profoundly inspired by the words of then-President Brage Golding, who spoke at his 1982 commencement. Golding told the graduates that no matter what they had studied, they had all learned the same thing: “A way of thinking to attack challenges, solve problems, identify solutions and provide something better in whatever field you are engaged in.”

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For details on the Ambassador Crawford College’s new building, visit kent.academicaffairs.com/crawford.