

AT&T VP Jenna Whitmire and Master of Science in Analytics students Headline Texas A&M's 9th Annual Analytics Forum at Mays Business School's CityCentre Houston Campus

Analytics professionals and industry leaders gathered at Texas A&M University's Mays Business School at Houston CityCentre to present real-world uses of analytics to strengthen organizations' operations. This year featured a diverse group of organizations such as organ procurement/transplantation, federal government, and oil & gas.

"Organizations accumulate data by the second. In the age of digital transformation, companies need the power of analytics to improve their competitive advantage and operations. They need to consistently utilize data to drive better business decisions." said Myra Gonzalez, MS Analytics Program Director. This annual event provides a venue for people in the Houston business community, faculty, staff, and students to gather to discuss analytics and share best practices.

The need for data scientists and analysts was further remarked by Jenna Whitmire, Vice President, Data, Tools & Advanced Analytics at AT&T and a Texas A&M Class of 2005 graduate. During her keynote address, she shared that as a leader of 500+ data engineers, analysts, modelers and developers, the need for people with data analytics skills has never been greater than today, and there's never been more investment in data and AI. In addition to a strong statistics foundation and coding, Whitmire emphasized that expertise in communications and partnering with business leaders is critical to success. "If you are a student in this program, then you will have the opportunity to make scaled impact with your skills. You will influence outcomes for customers and businesses, but it takes ingenuity, courage, and tenacity in addition to great analytics skills."

Presentations were made by current and former students of the Master of Science in Analytics program. Bilal Zuberi currently serves as the Head of Business Systems for SLB where he is tasked with accelerating digital transformation and enterprise software solutions for the Production Systems division. His presentation was on how to accelerate tendering capacity and improve the "engineer-to-order" quotation process using neural network models. Other industries also saw the need to improve operations through analytics. Master of Science in Analytics Class of 2023 student, Jonathan Hewlett, felt his organization would benefit from process improvements and knew the data they collected was the answer. He built Machine Learning prediction models to study geographically based organ donation. This helped his organization to increase potential transplants and increase the number of lifesaving organs available for transplant.

Our final presentation was conducted by Master of Science in Analytics Class of 2023 student, Victor Frausto, who serves as a Program Analyst for the Drug Enforcement Administration. He wants to help the agency with data-driven decisions to assist investigations and operations along the southwest border. His approach analyzes National Seizure System data to identify trends or patterns to disrupt the flow of dangerous drugs. Better decision-making also helps his organization improve the allocation of resources and workforce.

"We enjoy providing a forum to foster discussion about data and analytics challenges that companies face and share ideas for Houston-area businesses to stay ahead of the game," said Gonzalez. "We can't wait for next year's event!"

Presentation slides and more information can be found at https://mays.tamu.edu/ms-analytics/analytics_day/

The free event was hosted by [Texas A&M University's MS \(Master of Science\) Analytics Program](#), which offers a business analytics master's degree available in Houston and across North America via live video stream to teach working professionals the skills needed to thrive in an increasingly data-driven world. For program information, please contact Javier Aldape, Associate Director: jaldape@mays.tamu.edu or 979-845-2149