

2020-2021 Outstanding Project Award Winner Jolon Koppmann



A passion for the manufacturing industry and an inquisitive mind led Jolon Koppmann to focus her master's project on Big Data Analytics and its application to small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Written for her M.S. in Information Systems and Technology, *Overcoming the Challenges of Big Data Analytics Adoption for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises in the Manufacturing Industry* earned her the 2020-2021 Outstanding Project Award in the Computer Science, Mathematics, Biological Sciences, and Physical Sciences category.

"Big Data Analytics seems like the next big thing that's out there, and there's a huge opportunity to utilize the data in manufacturing," Koppmann explained. "But I saw a gap in the research when it came to applying it to SMEs."

Her project takes a practical approach to filling that gap. She first investigates the issues specific to the manufacturing industry, then provides case studies of SMEs that have found varying ways to adopt Big Data Analytics to their organizations, and concludes with recommendations for plant managers.

As a cost accountant and analyst at International E-Z Up, Koppmann knows first-hand the challenges smaller manufacturing companies face. She was eager to learn more about data analytics while continuing her career in manufacturing, but she was unsure what degree program was right for her. When she heard about the M.S. in Information Systems and Technology at CSUSB, she said she felt drawn to the program.

"I always wanted to pursue a master's and I was considering an MBA. But when I learned about the new MSIST program, it sounded like it was right up my alley. It was a really good fit. I was able to gear everything I learned in my classes to manufacturing."

Koppman said she benefited from the expertise of her faculty committee, especially that of her advisor, Dr. Mohabbati. "My advisor has been very helpful. She suggested I look into data life cycle management plans and that made my research a lot easier. She was my first choice as chair so I was excited when she agreed to chair my project."

Koppmann plans to continue to work in the manufacturing field, and to blend accounting with analytics. She is eager to apply her new knowledge at E-Z Up, but she has had to put some of her plans on hold since her position is remote until January 2022. "There's a lot of room for using new technology in the factory I work in and a lot of things on my to-do list. I have already used some of what I learned, and I look forward to doing more."