

Recognizing Sustained Outstanding Service Jim Combs Honored with SMA's Most Prestigious Award



The [Southern Management Association](#) (SMA) is pleased to recognize **James G. (Jim) Combs**, of University of Central Florida, as the 2020 winner of its highest honor, the [J. G. "Jerry" Hunt Sustained Outstanding Service Award](#).

Dr. Combs will be recognized at the 2020 SMA Annual Conference to be held **October 20-24** in St. Pete Beach, FL.

“I feel deep gratitude toward SMA and all of the people who I have worked with to help make SMA even stronger,” Combs said. “SMA is where I have developed the most meaningful friendships among colleagues. It is my ‘academic home.’ Because I have so much respect for SMA, its members, and its accomplishments, I am humbled by receiving this award.”

In keeping with SMA’s mission, tradition, and Jerry Hunt’s legacy, the 2020 James G. (Jerry) Hunt Sustained Outstanding Service Award seeks to recognize an individual who has provided continued outstanding service to SMA. This honor is awarded based upon; (1) Magnitude/Impact of the Nominee’s contributions to SMA; (2) Variety of Contributions to SMA, and (3) Length of Service to SMA.

The Hunt Award recognizes an individual who has consistently helped SMA reach its goals and mission over a period of years. The individual recognized must have made important, sustained, and current contributions to SMA, including, but not limited to, elected office (e.g., board member, treasurer, secretary), appointed position (e.g., track chairs, committees) and volunteer service (e.g., paper reviewers, session chairs and discussants) as well as extraordinary contributions to SMA (e.g., local arrangements, financial contributions). The winner of this award should be either active or recently active in the Southern Management Association.

Dr. Combs is an SMA Fellow who has been a member of the association for more than two decades. He has served as a SMA Board member from 2005-2008 and in the Officer Leadership rotation from 2011-2017.

In his nomination letter, **T. Russell Crook** commended Combs for exemplifying the servant leader nature and spirit of SMA through his work as an SMA conference track chair, board member, session chair, discussant, featured panelist, *Journal of Management* Editorial Review Board member, member of the *Journal of Management* Editor Search Committee, and organizer of dozens of SMA events. Crook particularly noted Combs’s help in establishing SMA’s endowment as a board member and streamlining decision-making as President.

“As of the last report, the endowment has surpassed \$2 million, and will, no doubt, help support future conferences and PhD students,” Crook noted. “...Professor Combs has left an indelible imprint on SMA. And, not only this, but I suspect that he will continue to do so in the future...I could not think of a better recipient of the Hunt Award than Professor Jim Combs.”

In discussing his honor, Combs acknowledged the contributions others have made to his career and successes as well.

“No one wins this award on their own merit,” he said. “SMA has a great leadership team and we empower each other to get things done. My goal has always been to make SMA stronger, but sometimes we make decisions under uncertainty. This award is an outward symbol that at least some of those decisions have borne fruit and that the years of very enjoyable hard work have had a positive impact.”

Combs expressed gratitude to SMA and its members for the continued support he has received throughout his career.

“While SMA has played an important role in my intellectual development, it is even more important as source of social support,” he noted. “We work in a competitive field where we are bombarded with negative feedback. SMA is a place where I always feel warmth and support; it is where I can relax and be myself. I will forever be thankful for the SMA members who have befriended me and offered unwavering support. It is truly unique among academic organizations.”

Dr. Combs earned his PhD at Louisiana State University. He is currently the Della Phillips Martha Schenck Chair of American Private Enterprise at the University of Central Florida and Visiting Professor at the University of Ottawa. Combs’s research interests are primarily in the areas of franchising, family business, research synthesis, and corporate governance, and appears in journals such as the *Academy of Management Journal*, *Strategic Management Journal*, *Journal of Management*, *Journal of Business Venturing*, *Entrepreneurship: Theory & Practice*, and *Organizational Research Methods*.

He has served as an Associate Editor at the *Academy of Management Journal*, *Entrepreneurship: Theory & Practice*, and will be joining the 2020-2023 editorial team at the *Journal of Management*. He has served on the Executive Committees of the Strategic Management and Entrepreneurship Divisions of the Academy of Management.

The 2020 Hunt SOSA Selection committee was comprised of **Pamela Perrewé** (Chair, Florida State University), **Tim Barnett** (Mississippi State University), **Micki Kacmar** (Texas State University), and **Terri Scandura** (University of Miami).

Learn more about the [nomination process](#) for the James G. Hunt SMA Sustained Outstanding Service Award and [read a list of past Hunt winners](#) on the SMA website.