

Department of Economics presents

David S. Saurman
Provocative Lecture Series 2018



Howard Root

Founder and CEO of Vascular Solutions, Inc.

“Who Watches the Prosecutors?”

“When prosecutors can use false criminal charges to destroy everyone except the few wealthy and unbroken defendants like me, then virtually everyone is in danger – even if you’ve done nothing wrong.”

Not all alleged criminal activity is prosecuted equally. Overwhelmed by cases, prosecuting attorneys must choose which cases to prosecute, but how is this choice made? Do they select complex, drawn-out cases that protect the most citizens or quick cases that are seemingly easy to win? Do they give consideration and preference to cases that bring personal prestige and advancement?

This is a story about prosecutorial discretion run amok and Howard Root is the hero of the story. He was the founder and CEO of Vascular Solutions, Inc., a medical products company. For five years, Howard and his company battled baseless criminal charges at a time when prosecutors pursued cases to meet political ends. Howard risked his company and his freedom by taking his case to court. Eventually, he was acquitted on all charges, but it was a victory that cost Howard and his company \$25 million. Howard Root tells his riveting story in a book he co-authored called *Cardiac Arrest*.

This Provocative Lecture challenges you to consider ways to keep prosecutorial discretion in check. CEOs have oversight from boards of directors, stockholders, the Securities and Exchange Commission, and the market for corporate takeover. Who watches the prosecutors?

Howard Root is the recently retired Chief Executive Officer of Vascular Solutions, Inc. Howard founded Vascular Solutions, Inc. in 1997, took it public in 2000, and grew it into a worldwide medical device company that he sold to Teleflex for \$1 billion in February 2017. www.howardroot.com

**Thursday,
November 8th**

SJSU, Student
Union Theatre
5:15-6:45pm

*Free and open
to the public*

The Department of Economics invites students, faculty, and the general public to consider intellectual arguments on controversial topics. Presenters are noted for outstanding scholarship and public speaking ability. This series fosters the tradition of higher education to challenge ideas and develop critical thinking in an environment of respect for intellectual discourse. Our goal is that you engage critical thinking skills to reach your own informed position on controversial issues. We invite you to attend, to relax, to ponder, and to enjoy the thought process.

For more information or to be added to our events list, please contact: John.Estill@sjsu.edu