

INSIDE BAUER

Fall/Winter 2015 Volume 3, Issue 1

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MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the C. T. Bauer College of Business at the University of Houston is threefold: to create and advance knowledge that will shape and address new business realities, to provide a challenging learning environment through a rich variety of pedagogical approaches, and to prepare our students for effective and responsible business leadership worldwide.

Inside Bauer is published by the Office of Communications in the Office of the Dean.

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Many Thanks!

Thank you to the young women who participated in the photo shoot for our cover story.

Ashlin Brown
Hattie Golemo
Peyton Jones

Kate Molony
Payton Warren

GREETINGS

This issue of *Inside Bauer* magazine explores a topic that we've been discussing at length among faculty, staff, students, alumni and partners — how can we ensure that as a business school, we are providing equal opportunities for all students, regardless of gender, and in turn, serve as a model for industry to do the same?

You will read in our cover story some of my thoughts on the subject and what Bauer College will be doing over the next year through our Working Families Initiative. This stemmed from a discussion earlier this year at the White House, where I joined more than 45 other business school deans from across the United States and committed to a set of best practices that are designed to address the issue at a broad level.

To me, this isn't only a matter of fairness. It's also one of good business — research suggests that by building a culture that embraces differences and by establishing organizational policies that allow for flexibility, we create a more diverse workforce, which leads to better performance on several dimensions.

Throughout this issue of *Inside Bauer*, you'll see stories highlighting some of our female faculty, students and alumni. Given the theme of this issue, I wanted to share with you the story of a woman who inspires me.

She did not attend college or even high school. She had four kids and was widowed in her twenties, and remarriage was never an option. Cooking and cleaning for others was all she knew. One thing, she managed to do — send her children to school.

Her children borrowed books they could not afford to buy and studied under street lights, because electricity was expensive. More than one meal a day was a luxury, and more than one set of clothes a year was an anomaly. One thing they learnt was the importance of hard work and a positive attitude.

When he turned 16, her son decided to travel to the big city to find a job. Over time, he built a successful career, married the love of his life and had two children. He did not forget his mother and brought her to the city to live with him and his family. She spent the second chapter of her life with her children and grandchildren, bent on a mission of giving back.

She was my grandmother, who passed away a few years ago. She was, and continues to be, my inspiration. She did not run a company, she did not govern a country, she did not sit on boards, and she did not seek appointments, but she had the ability to influence others. She taught me to think big and think of a cause larger than myself. To her, that cause was helping the less fortunate. She taught me never to feel sorry for myself. Life is just too short to be doing this.

I hope you will be inspired by this story and those in the pages that follow and join us as we celebrate and empower working women and families.

Sincerely and with warm regards,



Latha Ramchand

Dean and Professor, Finance
C. T. Bauer College of Business
University of Houston

A Carnegie-designated Tier One research university



HI THERE,

Over the last several months, as our team produced this issue of *Inside Bauer*, I have spent a great deal of time speaking to Bauer College students, faculty, staff and alumni in different stages of their lives and careers.

Many of the people we're highlighting in these pages are women, given the focus of our cover story on the college's initiative to ensure that curriculum, policies and opportunities are aligned with the needs of the diverse student population and industry that we serve.

Even though we produced this issue with women in mind, I think the overall theme ended up being one of living life with passion, purpose and positivity.

We spoke to Bette Stead, who is part of the fabric of the Bauer College story. She's blazed trails for women in business and although she's no longer teaching, she continues to support Bauer students today through scholarships.

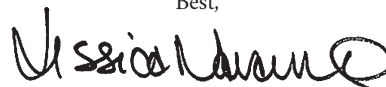
And, we also spoke to students who are just beginning their journeys into the workplace. Christina Brown will graduate from Bauer in December, and through her involvement in the Program for Excellence in Selling, she already has a job lined up and a solid plan for her future.

Bette and Christina couldn't be at two more different points in their lives. One has decades of experience traveling, teaching, learning and living, while the other aspires to create those kinds of moments for herself. But, as we spent time with both of them separately, I couldn't help but see striking similarities — that kind of

joie de vivre that seems to be inherent in most everyone you meet with a Bauer connection.

As you read each of the stories here, my hope is that you can feel the energy of each person extending from the page. And, I hope that you can feel the genuine excitement that our team of writers, photographers and designers had as we tackled each assignment. We're in the business of storytelling, and I think that the stories in this issue are some of the most inspiring we've had the opportunity to tell.

Best,



Jessica Navarro

(BA '07, MA '12)

Director of Communications



Share your Story

We're always looking for inspiring stories of Bauer students, alumni, faculty and staff. Email insidebauer@bauer.uh.edu to share your story, and you may be featured in an upcoming issue.



ASSOCIATE
PROFESSOR DUSYA
VERA SAYS SHE
HAS LEARNED THE
GREATEST LESSONS
IN LIFE FROM
HER CHILDREN —
(FROM LEFT)
DUSYA, LIAM
AND TONY.



Infinite Possibility

**MANAGEMENT PROFESSOR SHARES
PERSPECTIVE ON MOTHERHOOD
AND CAREER**

Story by Jessica Navarro, Photos by Nicki Evans

Dusya Vera is a flurry of motion. In conversation, she speaks with her hands, often leaning forward to nod or ask a question. Vera's life, too, is one of constant movement — she is a mother of triplets, and she works full-time as an associate professor of management at Bauer College, producing academic research and teaching graduate-level courses.

“Of course I have felt overwhelmed many times, and I still do sometimes,” Vera said. “But the problem with feeling overwhelmed is that we are judging ourselves. So, one thing I repeat to myself is, ‘I am doing the best I can.’”

Vera has been on-the-go since she was a little girl, growing up in Guayaquil, Ecuador, as the oldest of four siblings. Her parents enrolled their children in a range of lessons and classes — ballet, English, karate, art, piano.

“I loved it,” she said. “It was such a rich experience, and I have a lot of happy memories.”

Even with the opportunity to study in a range of areas, Vera didn’t have a set career trajectory. Although her parents both had doctoral degrees — a rarity in Ecuador at that time — and taught part-time at the university, being a professor wasn’t Vera’s immediate plan.

“I went through a period where I had no idea what I was going to be,” she said. “I had education in my family and grew up in an environment of educators, but I didn’t really know. I was a little lost for a while.”

She earned a bachelor’s degree in computer engineering from the Polytechnic University of Guayaquil before receiving an MBA from the University of Pittsburgh. With her graduate degree, Vera came back to Guayaquil in the mid-90s to serve as the IT director of the city’s burgeoning stock exchange.

“It was this tiny little thing, starting to grow,” she said. “Nobody really knew what a stock was, so a lot of the job was educating the public and the firms about the stock market.”

Although Vera didn’t have the formal title of “educator,” her innate love of teaching remained strong. She taught part-time as an adjunct professor in the evenings and on the weekends, before an experience at a Guayaquil executive management institute convinced her she could pursue full-time what she’d always seen as a hobby.

“I realized at that point that the professors in this management institute were doing the job full-time, and I could, too,” said Vera, who left the stock exchange and started teaching executive education full-time before ultimately earning her Ph.D. from the University of Western Ontario and taking an academic job with Bauer College.

“I have these humongous hopes and beliefs for my children, and now I have that for my students, too. I see infinite possibility for all of them.”

“The best part about being a professor is you are constantly learning,” Vera said. “It’s like being a student for a living. In order to be able to communicate all this new insight and knowledge to students, you have to learn and study yourself. For me, it’s the perfect job.”

She’d been teaching in the Department of Management at Bauer for three years before becoming pregnant through in vitro fertilization.

“I was 34, and it had been not so easy to get pregnant, and then I end up becoming pregnant with triplets,” Vera said. “Even when we were told I was pregnant, we were just so eager — all we had wanted was at least one child; we didn’t know what having three would be like.”

During her first prenatal appointment, a doctor told her, “Your job is to stay pregnant until week 32.” A follow-up visit with a high-risk OB-GYN raised the stakes to week 34.

“I taught at Bauer until week 20, which was the end of the spring semester,” Vera said. “I had extremely sweet students. If something dropped on the floor, they’d all rush to get it.”

At the start of the summer, she became a “couch potato,” albeit one that kept working — “I told my department chair, ‘I’m going to work on my research all summer from home.’”

At the end of her second trimester, though, Vera began to experience contractions.

“I went to the hospital, and they never let me leave. I spent seven weeks there on bedrest,” she said.

Vera made it exactly to week 34 of her pregnancy, giving birth to her triplets at the end of the summer. She named the children Liam, Tony and Dusya (in South American culture, it’s common to pass family names down to both daughters and sons). Life with three newborns was somewhat of a blur, she said.

“They were preemies, and two had to stay two weeks in the hospital, while another got a staph infection at birth in the hospital and had to stay two months,” Vera said.

Still, the family soon adjusted to the new reality, and she returned to face-to-face teaching the next spring.

“It became a constant journey in compartmentalizing,” Vera said, describing how she balanced career and motherhood.

Just before the triplets turned 2, she faced a new challenge, as Dusya and Liam were diagnosed with autism.

"If I have to think about my life, everything else seems so easy compared with the autism diagnosis," Vera said. "I didn't even know what autism was — zero knowledge. And these were my first kids, so I didn't know a lot about what they should be doing at different times, and they were preemies, so they were supposed to be delayed."

Her initial reaction was fear and panic.

"Usually when doctors tell you about autism, they don't say anything good," Vera said. "They only tell you it's a bad thing, and the kids will need massive therapy. It was very scary."

But, she determined that in order to help her children, she first had to change her perspective.

"I was still in a lot of fear, but then everything shifted," Vera said. "I realized that kids see the world through their parents' eyes. All the possibilities would open for them if they could see the possibility in my eyes."

That shift in thinking has made all the difference, she said.

"It's the power of attitude," Vera added. "We think autism is about sending the kid to therapy, and they do have to do massive therapy, but the attitude is more important. Autism sounds like a tragedy, but eventually, it can be the greatest opportunity for change and growth, for both the parent and the child. I've learned so much. The greatest lessons of my life didn't come from any academic program — they came from these three kids."

Now 10, the children still have challenges to overcome but are happy and determined, Vera said.

"Dusya is my decisive child — when she wants something, she will persist until she gets it. It's just a matter of what she decides to do with that persistence," she said. "Tony is very creative and funny. He wants to write in pictures; he's very visual. Liam has the most challenges with communication, but he's a very sweet boy, into musical instruments and vehicles."

Vera added: "I have three kids who are fantastic, and they are each a miracle in progress. They are learning so much and going out of their comfort zones. And, whatever we ask them to do, how could we do less? We have to rise to the challenge, too."

Motherhood has impacted Vera on the job, as well.

"Having triplets and kids with special needs, I think I'm more compassionate of what others are going through," she said. "I have these humongous hopes and beliefs for my children, and now I have that for my students, too. I see infinite possibility for all of them."

On Another Note



THE ART OF COMPARTMENTALIZING

Although Associate Professor Dusya Vera has plenty to keep her busy, she enjoys blocking chunks of time for her academic research.

"For example, on a certain week, I would block off some days on my calendar from 9-5, no teaching and no committees on those days, to shut my door and jump into my research," she said.

Vera's research focuses on leadership, strategy, organizational learning and improvisation. The latter was the focus of her doctoral dissertation and an area that she could draw personal experience from her time working in South America.

"We assume that we have to be prepared and plan everything, but in many cultures, improvisation is actually how business is done," Vera said. "In the North American context, the key is to learn how to improvise well, so that it can complement our planning skills. In so many industries where technology and innovation move fast, and you have to react to what competitors are doing or what customers are requesting, to be able to think on your feet and be creative and spontaneous on the go is very helpful."

She has published research in top academic and practitioner journals, including the *Academy of Management Review*, *Organization Science*, *The Leadership Quarterly* and *Journal of Management*, among others.



BACK TO THE FUTURE

Bauer Professor Teaches Technology with a Nod to the Past

By Amanda Sebesta & Jessica Navarro

Budapest native Emese Felvegi didn't need to speak a word of English in her childhood home. Her family spoke Hungarian.

But that didn't stop the curious youngster from learning the language — repeat viewings of *Star Wars* and a passion for The Beatles, along with her more formal education, expanded her vocabulary and her worldview.

Now a clinical assistant professor in Bauer College's Department of Decision & Information Sciences, Felvegi applies the same thirst for knowledge (and affinity for pop culture from her childhood) as she teaches her students. Her undergraduate MIS 3300 class introduces students to computers and management information systems.

Most students come to class with an awareness of the importance of technology to their personal lives, Felvegi said, but not necessarily for business or social good.

"I'm trying to help students pay attention to the world around them and the technology they can leverage for their benefit," she said.

She does that by assigning projects that teach students the practical uses of desktop and cloud-based applications. Felvegi also brings in frequent guest speakers from local businesses and Bauer student organizations, helping students put the tools they study into context.

In the last year, she has taken several student groups to The Printing Museum in Houston's Montrose neighborhood, giving them a historical perspective on information systems. There, students can print on a replica Gutenberg press and a 19th-century Columbian iron handpress and try out a linotype machine.

"Students leave more mindful of what's in their pockets, what potential lies in using all these devices," Felvegi said. "The experience can give them a greater sense of progress in the digital age as well."



I'M TRYING TO HELP STUDENTS PAY ATTENTION TO THE WORLD AROUND THEM AND THE TECHNOLOGY THEY CAN LEVERAGE FOR THEIR BENEFIT.



When she isn't teaching, Felvegi continues to learn herself. She partners with Kathy Matthew, a friend and mentor from the University of Houston-Clear Lake, where Felvegi earned three degrees in educational leadership, instructional technology and reading. They collaborate on research that explores the digital divide and how technology impacts a person's social future and opportunities. Felvegi also mentors student research outside the classroom on student engagement, civility and ethics in the digital age.

Before coming to Houston, Felvegi earned a master's degree at the largest university in Hungary (Eötvös Loránd University counts multiple Nobel Prize winners among its alumni). She was then immediately "thrown in the deep end to either sink or swim — I had to adapt to new tools and technologies very quickly."

She served as project manager and assessment specialist on the national implementation of large-scale international comparative assessment projects for the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement.

There, Felvegi developed online training platforms and assessment frameworks, and published national research reports for policymakers and the general public.

"My job allowed me to attend workshops and conferences in New Zealand, Australia, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Sweden, where I was able to network with accomplished scholars and practitioners in my field," she said.

She set out to run her own consulting business in Budapest and worked with femtosecond lasers and environmental conservationists, continuing to work with government agencies as she started her career.

"I learned a lot about myself but I also found a gap of all these things I could still learn," she said.

On Another Note

WHO INSPIRES YOU?

Here, Clinical Assistant Professor Emese Felvegi shares the women who inspire her and her thoughts on where the tech industry stands in bridging the gender gap.

"The Internet has reshaped how we connect as people and how we engage with businesses. While gender remains a divisive issue online as well, new technologies can level the playing field. We have Megan Smith serving as the U.S. chief technology officer. Facebook, Yahoo!, IBM, HP, YouTube and Facebook all have female CEOs or COOs, in an era where STEM fields need role models for younger generations."

Ada Lovelace
Author and
Mathematician

Grace Hopper
Computer
Scientist

Dr. Mae Jemison
Astronaut
and Futurist

Dr. Brené Brown
UH Research
Professor of
Social Work and
Public Speaker

Felicia Day
CCO,
Geek & Sundry

BUSINESS, MEET TECHNOLOGY

After Early Career in Engineering, Assistant Professor's Research Delves into Practical Applications of User-Generated Content

By Wendell Brock

Seshadri Tirunillai spent the first part of his career in the engineering and technology sectors of his native India. He chose technology, he says, because he had always been intrigued by science.

Today, as an assistant professor in the Department of Marketing & Entrepreneurship at Bauer College, Seshadri — who uses his first name, or his nickname, Sesh — remains immersed in the world of technology. Focusing on user-generated content (UGC), his research uses statistical analysis to measure the effects of online chatter on business performance.

His dissertation — completed as a doctoral student at the University of Southern California (USC), where he earned his Ph.D. in business administration in 2011 — has been well received. The Bauer professor's most recent paper — "Mining Marketing Meaning from Online Chatter: Strategic Brand Analysis of Big Data Using Latent Dirichlet Allocation" — won the 2015 Lehmann Award for the best co-authored, dissertation-based paper published in the *Journal of Marketing Research*. A 2012 paper — "Does Chatter Really Matter? Dynamics of User-Generated Content and Stock Performance" — was published in *Marketing Science*, won

the John A. Howard/AMA Doctoral Dissertation Award, was featured in the Harvard Business Review and was a finalist for INFORMS' 2014 Frank M. Bass Dissertation Paper Award. He co-authored both works with Gerard J. Tellis, his academic adviser at USC and a distinguished professor at the Marshall School of Business.

The paper on Internet chatter and the stock market has aroused a great deal of interest. "[Stock market] researchers did 7.9 percent better than the S&P 500 index by (virtually) investing in brands on the basis of online chatter about them," the Harvard Business Review reported.

The authors "found that sheer volume of reviews was the best predictor of investment returns," the HBR said. "They also found negative chatter to be a better predictor than positive chatter."

Back in India, Seshadri worked in engineering and was involved in incubating a high-tech subsidiary of the firm during the dot-com boom. He earned a master's in management at the Indian Institute of Technology in Bombay.



Assistant Professor Seshadri Tirunillai has made a name for himself by studying the effects of user-generated content on business. A paper he co-authored recently won the 2015 Lehmann Award for best dissertation-based article in the *Journal of Marketing Research*.



As a full-time lecturer, he discovered a passion for teaching and research and decided to pursue his Ph.D. at USC.

“Technology has become fundamental to most businesses, and understanding the technology really helps in understanding the business,” the professor says of the connection between his past and present careers.

At Bauer, he says he’s been invigorated by the courses he teaches in online marketing and the potential for continued research on the interface of online consumer behavior and social effects of firms’ Internet activity.

“Some of the projects I’m currently working on are related to how online communities evolve and designing non-monetary incentives to motivate engagement,” he says. “How do they evolve over a period of time? And things associated with incentivizing consumers to actually respond on social media sites.”

“

**TECHNOLOGY HAS BECOME
FUNDAMENTAL TO MOST BUSINESSES,
AND UNDERSTANDING THE TECHNOLOGY
REALLY HELPS IN UNDERSTANDING
THE BUSINESS.**

”



UP CLOSE WITH: STEVE WERNER

Department of Management Chair Focuses on Applicable Research, Teaching

By Wendell Brock

Professor Steve Werner has been with Bauer College for 22 years. Along the way, the newly named chair of the Department of Management has published four books, led 32 study-abroad trips and authored numerous scholarly papers and magazine articles, most often on the topic of human resource management.

His latest paper (see sidebar) establishes a link between supplemental retirement plans and safe driving in the U.S. trucking industry. But Werner has never been one to publish work and let it languish.

“One of the concerns we always have as academics is we discover these things, and they go nowhere,” Werner says.

His response is to stay active in the community, talk to newspaper reporters when they call, publish articles that can be read by practitioners — and teach.

“Teaching is another way we can get the research out there,” says the professor, who writes a regular column for World at Work, the organization formerly known as the American Compensation Association.

Among the many things we learned about Werner during a recent conversation: He put himself through college by managing a convenience store for 10 years. His office is stashed with his many collections (football helmets, “Simpsons” figures, a Big Mouth Billy Bass singing fish). And he recently tackled a 25-story indoor ski slope — in a Dubai shopping mall, of all places. Some highlights from our chat:

Tell us about yourself.

I am originally from Northern California. I got my undergrad in mathematics and computer science, then got an MBA and worked for National Semiconductor there for a few years. I figured out rather quickly I didn’t want to sit in a cubicle my whole life.

What did you do at National Semiconductor?

I was a production control planner, determining which computer chips to make at four different factories around the world.

How did you become interested in human resources?

I just found it interesting. When I was in the workplace, I saw a lot of issues. Although it was manufacturing, and we were in semiconductors, all the problems seemed to be with the employees. You swam or sank, based on the people you had. So I was just interested in how they went about hiring people, how they trained

them, how they motivated them through pay, how they evaluated their performance. Most of my research focuses on pay and benefits. I thought, “Everybody is interested in how they get paid and why they get paid.” Pay means so much in this society. It’s attached to all kinds of social status and how you feel about yourself.

Recently you’ve been researching employee benefits. What did you discover?

I think historically companies have just kind of seen benefits as a necessary evil: “We have to give the benefit that everybody else gives. We have to stay competitive, or people will start complaining.” But they never really gave a lot of thought to what these benefits do: Do they have any purpose? Do they have any effect other than just stopping people from complaining? I think good companies are now thinking more proactively in terms of benefits: “What is the cost of this benefit to us? What can this benefit do in the long term to motivate people, to attract people, to retain people? Are there people that are going to stay with our company just because they get this benefit that they ordinarily wouldn’t?” And if that’s true, then that benefit does have a substantial value.

Why did you decide to study truckers?

Because the industry is so regulated, there’s some government data available on trucking and on whether firms offer pension plans or not. So we wanted to ask what kind of truckers companies attract if they offer a pension plan when that’s not really the norm in the industry. Does everybody care about a pension plan, or do some people care more than others? The idea is that a retirement plan is a type of insurance. So, people who are attracted to retirement benefits would be the ones who are more risk averse. And there’s pretty good literature out there that says that people who tend to be risk averse in one thing tend to be more risk averse in other things. People who are concerned about protecting themselves in the long run also tend to be more risk averse with driving. They tend to be safer and not take chances and use their seatbelts and so on. So, is there a relationship between offering a pension plan and having safe driving in your trucking company? And we found that there was a substantial effect.

What kind of response have you had?

The paper won’t be published until later this year or next. I think it will attract some interest, and I think it has potential to really open up this field, because the notion of thinking of benefits strategically hasn’t really been put out there yet. So it’s somewhat — dare I say? — groundbreaking. It could create a whole new way of looking at benefits.

THE STEVE WERNER FILE

Position: Professor and Chair, Department of Management

Education: BA and MBA, San Jose State University. Ph.D., University of Florida.

Latest paper: “Benefits and Strategic Outcomes: Are Supplemental Retirement Plans and Safer Driving Related in the U.S. Trucking Industry?” Co-authored with Bauer Department of Accountancy & Taxation professors Christian S. Kuate, Thomas R. Noland and Arthur J. Francia; forthcoming from *Human Resource Management Journal*.

Latest textbook: “Managing Human Resources in the Oil and Gas Industry,” with co-authors Andrew Inkpen and Michael Moffett, due out from PennWell Publishing in January.

Traveling teacher: Over the last 10 years, about 25 percent of all UH students who have studied abroad on faculty-led programs have gone with Werner — to Berlin and Prague, among other places.

Why teaching matters: “It really is a path for people to grow and to improve themselves and make their lives better, both at an individual level and at a societal level. So to be able to be part of that is a big deal, especially here at Bauer College, where we have so many students from families who have never gone to college.”

SETTING THE COURSE

New Faculty Include Academic Researchers, Corporate Veterans

By Jessica Navarro and Amanda Sebesta

THIS FALL, BAUER COLLEGE WELCOMED NEW FACULTY MEMBERS WITH EXPERTISE RANGING FROM LEADERSHIP AND CULTURE TO CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND TAX LAW. THEY ALSO BRING INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE FROM COMPANIES INCLUDING GULF OIL CORPORATION AND BNY MELLON.



XI (NOVIA) CHEN

Assistant Professor,
Department of Accountancy & Taxation

Xi (Novia) Chen finds teaching as rewarding as research.

“The best prize that my students offer me is their ‘I get it’ or ‘this makes sense’ responses after I explain a difficult concept, and this source of excitement sustains my passion for teaching,” she said. “As a professor, I get to meet and teach many new students every year, and I feel this is the most powerful thing I can do in my life.”

Chen’s research interests focus on the effect of taxes on firms’ financial reporting, investment, financing decisions, disclosure issues associated with multinational firms, information content of tax footnotes, determinants of tax avoidance and corporate governance.

She explained: “My research is at the intersection of corporate taxation and financial reporting. A few examples of my research include the effect of taxes on business decisions, such as whether and how tax deductibility affects compensation for corporate executives. These questions also have important policy implications such as whether current tax policy leads to inefficiencies and unintended consequences.”

Chen received her Ph.D. in accounting from the University of California, Irvine.



JOSHUA CUTLER

Assistant Professor,
Department of Accountancy
& Taxation

Joshua Cutler has crunched the numbers, and one thing is certain — he loves combining law and accounting in research.

“I want to show the important role of accounting in providing accountability and rationality to a free and prosperous society,” Cutler said. “Similarly, I like researching and teaching in the area of tax because it embodies the relationship between citizens and the state.”

His research interests include interaction of legal institutions and accounting, voluntary disclosure, disclosure-related litigation, insider trading, role of media in financial reporting and the textual analysis.

Cutler received his Ph.D. in accounting from the University of Oregon and his J.D. from Harvard Law School.



MARK GRIMES

Assistant Professor,
Department of Decision
& Information Sciences

Mark Grimes wants his students to solve mysteries.

“I love helping students develop new skills and knowledge that enhance their lives in some way. I think people often see their computer as a mysterious ‘black box,’” Grimes said. “By explaining how computers work using examples students can relate to, I think it removes a lot of uncertainty around management information systems classes.”

His primary research focus is analyzing human computer interaction behaviors, such as typing and mouse movements to detect changes in emotional and cognitive states.

Before coming to Bauer, Grimes served as vice president in the Intel systems engineering group for The Bank of New York Mellon and as an enterprise technologist for First Horizon National Corporation.

“While I enjoyed working in industry, I feel that through research and teaching I can have a greater impact on businesses than would be possible as an employee at a single company,” Grimes added. “Bauer is a great place to do this — the faculty here are top notch, as is the support for research and teaching.”

Grimes received his Ph.D. in management information systems at the University of Arizona Eller College of Management.



DEJUN (TONY) KONG

Assistant Professor,
Department of Management

Dejun (Tony) Kong likes to look at things a bit differently.

“I have always been fascinated by why and how people see things differently and have different reactions to things,” he said. “Through my research, I have not only gathered insights into human psychology but also gained a better understanding of myself as a human being.”

Kong’s research interests include trust in various contexts, negotiations, leadership and cross-cultural contexts, social-psychological processes in leader-member relationships, and negotiation relationships and peer relationships.

“In college, I always thought that I would be a business consultant or investment banker, but during my internship at Fortune magazine in New York City, I realized that I had a strong interest in research,” he said. “I was fascinated by psychology and organizational behavior, and decided to pursue a Ph.D.”

Kong is a member of the Academy of Management, Association for Psychological Science and the International Association for Conflict Management. He is also a member of the editorial board for the *Journal of Trust Research*.

Kong received his Ph.D. in organizational behavior from Washington University Olin Business School.



KEVIN ROSHAK

Assistant Professor,
Department of Finance

In his research, Kevin Roshak studies market effects of economic policies implemented in the wake of the financial crisis.

His recent papers have examined the implications of accounting oversight on a bank's level of troubled mortgage restructurings as well as the market's reaction to predictable trading halts.

Roshak's research interests include empirical microeconomics, corporate finance, financial institutions and financial regulation.

He received his Ph.D. in finance from Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management.



SANG BYUNG SEO

Assistant Professor,
Department of Finance

Sang Byung Seo's research explores how economic catastrophes impact the stock market and pricing.

Before coming to Bauer, he earned a Ph.D. from The Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania and produced papers investigating perceived investor risk and market volatility resulting from regime and belief shifts in firms.

His research interests include asset pricing, credit risk, derivatives markets and financial econometrics. Prior to his career in academia, Seo was an assistant manager for derivatives modeling at Korea Bond Pricing & Korea Ratings Co.



DARLENE SERRATO

Clinical Assistant Professor,
Department of Accountancy & Taxation

Darlene Serrato lives for light bulb moments from her students.

"I love to convince students that they can learn the subject, even if it is not one of their strengths. I learn a new way to approach a subject almost every time that I teach it," Serrato said. "I love seeing the 'light bulb' go on when a student finally understands a concept."

Before coming to Bauer, Serrato worked in the oil & gas industry, serving in a range of positions from senior analyst to programmer for Chemicals Management Information System with Gulf Oil Corporation. She also served as an associate professor of accounting at Houston Baptist University.

Serrato received her Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Houston.



ANTO (JOHN) VERGHESE

Clinical Assistant Professor,
Department of Decision
& Information Sciences

Anto (John) Vergheese's background in the engineering industry gives him a unique perspective in teaching and researching operations and supply chain strategy.

His research emphasizes the behavioral aspects of buyer-supplier relationships, incorporating theories from other disciplines, including organizational theory, strategic management and organizational behavior.

Vergheese earned undergraduate and master's degrees in engineering (mechanical and industrial, respectively) before working as an operations engineer at Dell. He then earned a Ph.D. from Texas A&M University in operations and supply chain management. Previously, he taught operations and supply chain courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels at Texas Christian University.



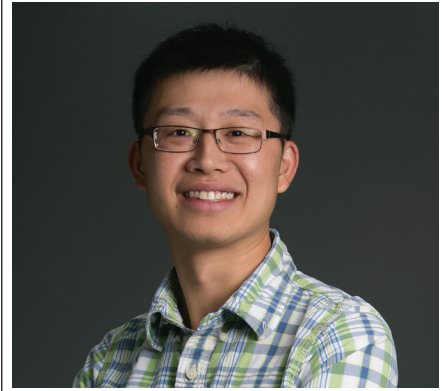
WILLIAM (BILL) ZAHN

Clinical Assistant Professor,
Department of Marketing
& Entrepreneurship

William (Bill) Zahn shares his marketing insight with students, practitioners and scholars through teaching, consulting and researching.

Zahn, who earned a Ph.D. in marketing from Bauer College in 2011, teaches courses in professional selling, social media marketing, search engine marketing and introduction to marketing.

His research interests include marketing strategy, social media marketing, sales and marketing ethics, organizational and psychological climate and intra-organizational competition. Zahn's previous published research has explored customer relations in sales, including how "learned helplessness" translates into salespeople's behaviors with customers, delineating some surprising findings about what types of leadership can offset these undesirable customer-directed behaviors.



MING ZHAO

Assistant Professor,
Department of Decision
& Information Sciences

Ming Zhao knows that the best academic business research has practical implications for companies.

That's why his research scope is twofold — he studies established scholarly theories in operations management, and then he develops applications for the research that can be used in industry, specifically energy and healthcare, to improve optimization technology.

Before coming to Bauer, Zhao worked for SAS, a leading analytics, business intelligence and data management firm. There, he served as an operations research specialist for the Center of Operations Research, supporting all OR-aspects of customer engagement and working closely with customers to scope projects, formulate models, develop algorithms and ultimately, implement solutions.

His research interests include mixed integer linear and nonlinear programming, supply chain management, power system operations, and stochastic and robust optimization.

Zhao received his Ph.D. in industrial and systems engineering from the University at Buffalo.

students



IN BLOOM

Supply Chain Student Describes Her Transformation From Shy Freshman to Involved Senior

By Aishah Malik

We all have different paths that we must take going through college, and Bauer College has really helped transform me into the person I am today.

With only a year left of school, I have never been more proud of the decisions that I have made and where I currently stand. In the beginning, I rarely went out of my way for anything or anyone. Yes, I joined the “mandatory clubs,” but I never attended the weekly meetings and never participated in any extracurricular activities. I was so comfortable with where I was that I didn’t think anything in my life needed to change.

As sophomore year arrived, classes got harder, and my social circle remained the same. In the past, my schedule consisted of going to class and straight home afterwards. My days became more and more uneventful and basic. I knew I wasn’t getting the real college experience — the experience I wanted — and that something was missing from my life. More and more I saw everyone around me creating amazing memories and making the most of the college experience. It made me realize the only person keeping me from this was me.

Before the start of my junior year, I knew I needed to make some changes, so I reevaluated my outlook on school and actually getting involved. One of my main goals was to surround myself with new people who shared my aspirations and were good pillars of support as we built lifelong friendships.

Someone once told me, “Surround yourself with people who have dreams, desires, and ambition; they’ll help you push for, and realize, your own.” It was through this idea that my true college experience started. As junior year began, I found myself growing out of my comfort zone and meeting new and inspiring people who I related to on different levels, which made me snap out of my routine. I also started researching different organizations that interested me.

One club in particular that I connected with was Bauer Ambassadors. Everyone talks about their niche organization, and Bauer Ambassadors was definitely mine. Not only has this organization helped me meet some of my lifelong friends, but it has also provided

me with leadership skills and given me a sense of community within Bauer.

I felt myself growing as a person, my grades had never looked better, and I loved what I was doing. At the end of this eventful fall semester, I had friends that shared my dreams and ambitions, and I had achieved my first officer position and so many exciting things to look forward to for the following semester. As spring semester came around, I was halfway through completing my Ted Bauer Leadership Certificate (which was the best decision of my life), had accepted two internship offers for the summer and fall, and to top it off, had become vice president of Bauer Ambassadors.

I realized before the start of my senior year that all these experiences shaped me into the person I wanted to become before I graduated college. I went from being a confused and lost freshman with a lot to offer and nowhere to go, to someone who exceeded her expectations and achieved greatness. The thought of this makes me so proud. I told myself I wanted to accomplish so much before I graduate college, and with one more year left, I have achieved more than I ever thought I would.

I love that I can share my experiences with others around me and show them what I did so that they too can accomplish their goals. I love knowing that people want to follow in my footsteps and want to take the risks I did. I realize now if you don’t like how things are going in your life, you have the power to change them. Try something different like I did. Don’t stay stuck — do better.

“
**DON'T STAY
STUCK—DO
BETTER.**
”





FROM ZERO TO THIRD

Bauer MBA Team Places in Google Challenge for River Oaks Chamber Orchestra Online Marketing Plan

By Wendell Brock

As an attorney who specializes in estate and business planning, R. Jason Griffin had little understanding of online marketing when he arrived at Bauer College to pursue his MBA.

When he decided to compete in the Google Online Marketing Challenge, he devoured the prescribed 700-page book on Google AdWords as if it were a legal tome.

Aigul Aubakirova (MBA '15) found herself in a similar situation. Until she enrolled in the course Professor Steven Koch teaches to prepare students for the Google Challenge, most of her studies had focused on finance and energy.

"Everything was new," she says of the competition, in which students around the world create marketing campaigns for real-life clients using Google AdWords and Google+.

But that didn't stop Griffin, Aubakirova and teammates Neil Gustafson and Matt Avery from immersing themselves in the project, exhibiting resourcefulness and perseverance at every turn.

One of the first things the team needed was a client. When Aubakirova mentioned this to Executive Professor Christopher Ross, he knew just where to send her.

"I was completing my three-year tenure as board chair of the River Oaks Chamber Orchestra, which has commissioned 50 new compositions on the musical side and has always been innovative and open to new ideas on the administrative side," Ross says. "It seemed like a perfect match."

As Anna Harris, director of development at River Oaks Chamber Orchestra (ROCO), remembers it: "They reached out to us, and

From left, Neil Gustafson, R. Jason Griffin and Matt Avery, along with Aigul Aubakirova (not pictured) competed in the Google Online Marketing Challenge, coming in third place in the AdWords Social Impact Awards Category.



YOU NEED TO BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND THIS NEW PHENOMENON AND MAKE SURE THIS IS A COMPONENT OF YOUR MARKETING STRATEGY.



we thought it was a great opportunity and something that could help us a lot, especially

because we had just launched a brand new website. And so it was just perfect timing.”

Indeed.

When Google announced its 2015 results for the Online Marketing Challenge, the Bauer team learned that it had scored an impressive third-place finish in the nonprofit category, the AdWords Social Impact Awards. And Ross had the pleasure of informing ROCO that it would receive a \$5,000 donation from Google, thanks to the team’s efforts.

For ROCO, a small nonprofit faced with the daily challenge of trying to sell classical music in the modern world, the gift was “huge,” Harris said. For the Bauer group, the experience provided a useful lesson in working with clients and understanding the intricacies of online marketing.

ROCO wanted to use the campaign to increase ticket sales, donations and web traffic in general. The Bauer team had three weeks and a \$250 Google AdWords budget to get the job done. “You can blow that very quickly if you are not careful,” Griffin says.

At first, the team’s ads got a disappointing number of clicks. Yet a remarkable 29 percent of those views converted into actual ticket sales. In the end, ROCO saw an 11 percent increase in revenues for the three-week period.

For Griffin, the challenge was a lesson in “the power of online marketing.”

“Not everybody wants to listen to classical music,” he says. “But by using an online marketing strategy, these guys were able to increase their revenues, increase their customer base, (and connect with) people who will come back for more. So when you look at any entrepreneurial venture, that’s an applicable lesson.”

In 2012, Griffin, who received his J.D. from the University of Houston Law Center in 2005, decided to pursue an MBA because he felt that he needed to “reboot” his career.

“I had a mortgage company that imploded in the financial crisis,” he says. After the crash, it took a while for his law practice to take off.

Now he says his time at Bauer has reinvigorated his entrepreneurial instincts. The Google Challenge, in particular, has taught him what it means to be a businessman in the digital age.

“We are all becoming more and more accustomed to using the internet as a medium for finding our goods and services,” Griffin says. “Marketing will continue to move further and further online as the consumers grow more accustomed to it. If you are a marketing professional or if you are growing a business, you need to be able to understand this new phenomenon and make sure this is a component of your marketing strategy.”

TOPPING GOOGLE’S LIST

After Clinical Assistant Professor and Assistant Dean Steven Koch created a course to prepare students for the Google Online Marketing Challenge, Bauer College has amassed a stellar track record.

In 2011, Bauer produced the competition’s overall Global Champions, beating out 4,000 teams from 60 countries. In 2013, a team from the college won the Americas Region. In addition, since 2011, the college has produced four top-three finishes in the non-profit category, the Adwords Social Impact Awards. (The team that finished third in that category this year — R. Jason Griffin, Aigul Aubakirova, Neil Gustafson and Matt Avery — is profiled in the accompanying article.)

This year, Koch engaged University of Houston alumna Anita Perez, co-founder and vice president of operations at Houston-based Internet marketing firm TopSpot (a 2015 Cougar 100 Company), as an adjunct professor and co-instructor.

Besides the third-place team, a second group from Bauer — Herbert Murcia, Brittany Young, Dylan Senter and Jordan Kunze — finished in the top 10 in the Social Impact category, for its work with the St. Louis-based Pujols Family Foundation.



Life is all about taking risks and thriving under pressure for management and marketing junior Taylor Olanski, a competitive diver.

DIVE IN

Dedicated Diver Taylor Olanski Uses Competitive Nature to Succeed at Bauer

By Jessica Navarro, Stephanie Phillips & Amanda Sebesta

For management and marketing junior Taylor Olanski, when faced with an uncertain situation, hanging back isn't an option — it's best to dive in.

The Canada native has faced her fears plenty of times, even at the young age of 18. She moved to Houston in 2013 from her hometown of London, Ontario, to pursue a business education at Bauer College on a diving scholarship.

"Diving and business are very similar," Olanski said. "Both are filled with opportunities for success. I love to compete, test my abilities and put everything I have into the job that I am doing."

She added: "I thrive under high pressure and intense situations. Diving has always given me that feeling, and as I grow in the business world, I know it will be the same for me."

Business runs in Olanski's blood. Her father is a managing partner who specializes in corporate law, and her mother is a director of critical care and trauma, while her older sister, Torri, is completing her marketing and entrepreneurship degree from Bauer College this fall. The sisters were also teammates on the UH Swimming & Diving Team, although an injury sidelined the elder Olanski, who is now the team's manager.

“

**I LOVE TO
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ABILITIES AND PUT
EVERYTHING
I HAVE INTO THE JOB
THAT I AM DOING.**

”

"The best advice my sister has given me to get through my college career is that it's OK to not know what you want to do with the rest of your life when you're 20," she said. "She has shown such commitment, drive and perseverance in her diving career and business endeavors that I find myself idolizing her work ethic and dedication."

That example seems to be working for Olanski, who has been recognized as Conference Diver of the Year by the American Athletic Conference and Most Valuable Team Member by UH Athletics.

After graduating from Bauer and finishing her stint on the diving team, Olanski plans to start a career in sales.

"My dream job would be a sales representative in the oil and gas industry," Olanski said. "I've always been drawn to the industry because of how competitive and demanding it is."



The DIRECTION
of her DREAMS

Marketing Senior Ready to Conquer
the World of Professional Selling

STORY BY JESSICA NAVARRO

PHOTOS BY NICKI EVANS





CHRISTINA BROWN
ISN'T AFRAID
TO DREAM
BIG.

Now 23, the Bauer College marketing senior still lives her life as she did as a kid growing up in Westchester, New York.

“As a child, you feel like nothing is impossible,” Brown said. “But as you get older, you learn about limits, and you start thinking through logical eyes. It’s important as a young adult to hold on to that childlike dream and just go for it.”

She graduates in December and already has a job lined up with Nationwide Financial, all thanks to taking a chance and enrolling in Bauer’s Program for Excellence in Selling (PES) last spring.

“At the time, I wasn’t sure if I wanted to pursue it or if I’d be any good at sales. It was completely out of my comfort zone,” she said. “I decided the day before the application was due that I was going to do it, and I put everything I had into my year in the program.”

That commitment helped her to complete PES as No. 2 in the class and connected her to EMC and 3M for



“When you take

RISKS,



summer internships. In her last year as an undergraduate, she took the role of assistant program manager for PES, helping to get students in the program internships and jobs.

"We have 26 corporate partners, and if you do well in the program, they want you," Brown said. "By the end of the program, most students will have three or four job offers."

In 2016, she will move to Ohio to work on the national sales desk for Nationwide, which she anticipates she'll do for a few years. Then, she plans to transition into face-to-face sales for the company and eventually run her own business.

Before finding Bauer College and PES, Brown didn't dream of a career in sales.

"To be honest, I thought I was going to be a hairstylist when I was a kid," she said. "But as time moved on, I thought I'd do something in the medical field."

That made sense, Brown said, because she loves helping others, and her mother has a bachelor's degree in nursing.

"But, when I got to college, I found out I was really good with math and science, so I decided I was going to be a chemical engineer," she said.

Even though she had talent in the field, she knew it wouldn't be a fulfilling career choice for her.

"I didn't really have a passion for it," Brown said. "Then, I came to Bauer and found marketing and sales."

The program appealed to the innate artist in Brown and opened a world of possibilities for her future that she hadn't before imagined.

"I thrive when I'm talking to others and getting to know people," she said. "I want to see what makes people happy and what they're passionate about, and I want to help with that. And, that's what sales is all about."

*that's
when
you*

GROW

the most."





In her last year at Bauer, Brown has had the opportunity to hone her relationship-building skills while growing personally, too. As an intern for 3M this summer, she traveled first to Minnesota to the company's headquarters for a two-week corporate training before living in Massachusetts for eight weeks.

As part of 3M's Staples key account team, she helped to analyze weekly point-of-sale data that drove business decisions. She also worked remotely with other interns stationed across the country, taking evening calls to work on a group project that they ultimately presented at the end of the summer.

In addition to the work experience, Brown said her summer internship reinforced that she's ready to take on the challenges that her first job out of college might bring.

"The experience allowed me to learn about myself and realize that I can venture out and experience the world," she said.

Even though graduation and a new career will broaden Brown's world view, she still plans to maintain the perspective she established as a little girl on the East Coast, playing in the backyard with her younger brothers (Stephen, 20, and Spencer, 18) and dreaming of big things.

"You can't be afraid of exploring your options and taking risks that might make you feel anxious at first," Brown said. "When you take risks, that's where you grow the most."



As a student in Bauer's Program for Excellence in Selling, Christina Brown has completed internships with 3M and EMC, and next year, she will take a full-time position with Nationwide.

On Another Note

"SHE INVESTED SO MUCH IN US"

If you ask Christina Brown how she became so poised and positioned for success, she'll tell you it's not by accident. It's just in her DNA.

"My mom is such a hard worker. She had a bachelor's degree in nursing, but she stayed home with my brothers and me from when I was 2 until 21. She made sure we were taken care of physically and spiritually, and she invested so much in us. If I can be 50 percent of the woman she is, I'm going to be fantastic."





“ BE PASSIONATE AND DEDICATED ABOUT WHAT YOU SEEK TO PURSUE, AND NO OBSTACLE WILL BE TOO HARD FOR YOU TO OVERCOME.”

ENGINEERING CHANGE

Professional MBA Student Leads Male-Dominated Industry

Intro by Jessica Navarro; Interview by Amanda Sebesta

Engineering has traditionally been an industry dominated — and led — by men.

Bauer MBA candidate Brooke Thomas-Eben is one of many professionals carving out a space in the field for women.

She started her career as a packaging engineer for Procter & Gamble, working in the Pringles plant. From there, she moved to P&G's headquarters in Cincinnati and transitioned to the commercial side of the business, serving as a product initiative manager for the company, where she led planning, scheduling and coordination for the Always brand.

Thomas-Eben now works for Dow Chemical as a project engineering manager. She began Bauer's Professional MBA program this fall and balances her career and graduate school responsibilities with motherhood — she has a 3-year-old daughter and is expecting a girl this fall.

Q: Tell me about your current role at Dow Chemical. What do you do?

A: I work as a project engineering manager for pipeline and facility projects, managing a team that consists of employees from several different engineering disciplines. Currently, I am working on a half-billion dollar hydrocarbons pipeline and storage facilities project, which will support the construction of a new world-scale hydrocarbons production plant at Dow Texas Operations in Freeport.

Q: Did you always see yourself going this route?

A: I have always wanted to get my MBA. The experience I garnered while in corporate America has been very valuable and has enabled me to define clearly what I enjoy and do not enjoy doing. With this clarity, I have been able

Q: Why did you want to pursue your MBA?

A: Although I have eight years of experience working in industry, I wanted to enhance my level of knowledge on the business side. I also have a keen interest in real estate development. The structure and industry support offered through the college's Graduate Real Estate Program made it clear that Bauer was the right place for me.

Q: What do you want to accomplish after you earn your MBA?

A: My goal is to be highlighted by *Inc.* or *Forbes* as one of the most successful real estate developers in the country. To reach that goal, I will build on the success of my initial experience in the real estate market and strategically develop and acquire multiple real estate deals sourced through my own private firm. I want to be recognized for delivering breakthrough results, building beautiful properties and maintaining an active community presence.

Q: How do you balance and prioritize school, a successful career and family life?

A: Starting school this fall, while pregnant and in a very busy work season, has been challenging. However, I have great support from my spouse (Arnold Eben), whom I met in college while pursuing my engineering degree. We have created a routine that works perfectly for the family. I am very motivated to complete this program so that also helps provide the drive I need to make it work.

Q: What do you do outside of class?

A: I love to travel internationally as frequently as possible. Typically, my husband and I take at least one international trip per year.

Last year, we had the pleasure of visiting several countries in Southeast Asia and the northern part of Australia.

Next year, we have set aside some time in the spring to visit South Africa and Dubai. The myth that having a family prohibits you from traveling is truly just that, a myth. It just takes a little more planning and having great family support.

Q: Have you faced any adversity in your professional career?

A: My role positions me in a male-dominated function. I personally am not intimidated by this environment. I have a good team, and when it's time to have the serious conversations, I maintain a professional composure, but I'm not afraid to address the issue at hand.

Q: What words of encouragement would you give to young women looking to pursue careers in engineering?

A: For all the young women I mentor, I encourage them to follow their passions. That is ultimately the foundation for success at anything you endeavor to do. The quantity of women in engineering has grown significantly. We are still a minority of the total workforce, but are growing exponentially. My message to any young woman is to be passionate and dedicated about what you seek to pursue, and no obstacle will be too hard for you to overcome.

BRIDGING THE GAP

Bauer Student Leaders Share Their Experiences

By Jessica Navarro

Bethina Campbell, Maria Fernanda Guerrero and Lola Soyebó Harris share many commonalities — they are all Bauer College students and leaders in organizations at the college (Women’s Energy Network, Bauer Women Society and the National Association of Women MBAs, respectively).

And, all three are determined to achieve personal and professional success, taking advantage of the opportunities that Bauer provides all of its students, regardless of gender, while setting an example for other female business students to continue to bridge the gap and create a more diverse workforce.

Bethina Campbell

*Accounting senior
Public Relations Officer, Women’s Energy Network*

“I am on the path to achieve my goals. The energy industry is historically male-driven, but the Women’s Energy Network at Bauer is showing me that women can succeed — and have succeeded — in this industry. Through this organization, I have had the opportunity to speak with members from our parent chapter

to learn more about their career paths, showing me how strong women really are and what we are truly capable of accomplishing. And, within Bauer, there are so many strong women who inspire me, from our dean to the professors and even the security guard in Melcher Hall. I never get discouraged by harsh comments because all successful women in the world have likely heard these comments and didn’t let it affect them.”

Maria Fernanda Guerrero

*Pre-business freshman
Corporate Relations Officer, Bauer Women Society*

“Bauer gives male and female students equal opportunities. But, there is still a gender gap with respect to the fields that are male-dominated, like engineering, science and finance, and I think the college is working hard to close those gaps by promoting diversity and an inclusive culture and supporting students throughout their studies. As a female business student, I have faced certain situations where I’ve been discouraged by classmates to take advantage of opportunities, but I have never let those situations affect me. On the contrary, I’ve set goals and know there will be adversities on the way that I’ll face.”

Lola Soyebó Harris

*MBA candidate
President, National Association of Women MBAs*

“I work, am in the Professional MBA program at Bauer and am a mother to two young sons. I realize I have additional responsibilities outside of my job and school, but I also know I am not the only mother pursuing an MBA. There have been other mothers who have done exactly what I am doing now, so I know juggling multiple responsibilities at once is not impossible. I have made peace with the tradeoffs I need to make in the short-term to pursue my goal. Outside of the classroom, Bauer has given me the opportunity to participate in a case competition, go on a study abroad trip, get involved in various student organizations and represent the college on various platforms, and I think these activities enrich the experience for any student, regardless of gender.”



These Bauer student leaders — (clockwise from top left) Bethina Campbell, Lola Soybo Harris and Maria Fernanda Guerrero — are making the most of the opportunities at Bauer College.



Cover
Story

THE PLACES SHE'LL GO

Bauer College's Response
to National Call to Support
Women in Business

Story by Jessica Navarro, Photos by Nicki Evans

When I

GROW UP

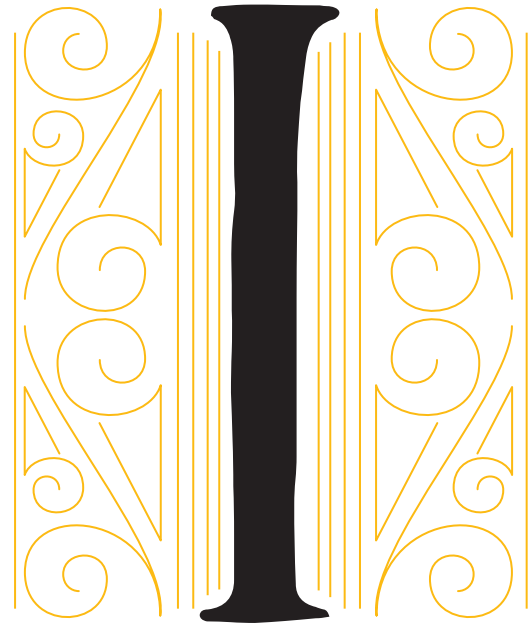
I want to be...





A
MOTHER
TEACHER
ENGINEER
CEO

ALL OF THE
ABOVE



In previous generations, young women may have had a more limited list of aspirations, or they may have thought of crossing one item from the list in favor of another.

But today, as women continue to redefine what it means to be a female in the workplace, girls are envisioning futures for themselves that include a range of responsibilities and roles.

And, the perspective shift is happening elsewhere, too, as issues of equitable access, compensation and resources have spurred a national conversation on how to help women succeed in business school and their careers.

In August, the Council on Women and Girls and the Council of Economic Advisers brought representatives from the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) and more than 45 business schools to the White House for a discussion. From that meeting, the group developed a set of best practices that focus on ensuring access for women to business school and careers, building a business school experience that prepares students for the workforce of tomorrow, ensuring that career services meet the needs of all students and exemplifying how organizations should be run.

Bauer College Dean Latha Ramchand participated in the August discussion in Washington, D.C. We spoke to her to learn more about the college's role in this national initiative.

Q: Tell us about the White House convening that you attended and the AACSB Best Practices document that was the result of the discussion. What is the goal of this national initiative?

A: First, it was an honor to be invited to this gathering and to be a signatory to the Best Practices document they shared which has been adopted by AACSB as well. Given that last year, our Professional MBA program was ranked by The Princeton Review as No. 6 in the country for providing opportunities for women, it is something that we clearly are thinking about and working on.

There are three reasons the discussion resonates in the context of what we do at Bauer and personally to me.

First, there are the facts for the U.S. economy. Today, more women graduate from college than men, a trend that started in 2010. The numbers suggest that 30 percent more women graduate compared to men. And, 67 percent of students who graduate college with honors are women.

While women make up 47 percent of the general workforce in the U.S., less than 5 percent of Fortune 500 companies have female CEOs, and less than 20 percent of S&P 500 board seats are held by women.

Meanwhile, there is gender parity in compensation across men and women who enter the workforce. Five years into their careers, women are paid 30 percent less than their male colleagues and after 10 years, they earn 60 percent less. Yet, academic research shows that organizations with women on their boards earn higher financial returns, are better organized and have overall improved organizational health.

The second area that resonates is that we have moved away for the most part from obvious biases and inequalities. What we currently deal with are subconscious biases in people's mindsets that affect the way we deal with female versus male colleagues in the workplace. Both women and men are guilty of these practices.

Finally, the issues that are relevant have broader implications in terms of productivity in the workplace and growing organizations. Diversity in the workplace is not just a "do good" initiative — it is a business imperative.

If we as a business school can help organizations realize the potential in growing a diverse workplace, then we would do the right thing by business and by society at large.

Q: So, you'd say this is a broader discussion than women's issues?

A: Absolutely. It is not just a focus on women's issues; it is a focus on growing value for an organization by ensuring flexibility in the workplace and by fostering a culture that embraces differences of all kinds — opinions, gender, ethnicity, preferences.



That, in turn, is the first step to innovation and growth. Innovation happens when we have the courage to move beyond what is currently the “norm” or the status quo. In this sense, the agenda is a focus on moving outside your comfort zone.

Q: What do you think are some of the biggest issues that women face in business school and higher education? How about in the workplace?

A: Right now, there are a number of issues for both. Unlike education or health care, we have fewer women than ever entering business schools interested in pursuing careers in business. We need to address the negative perceptions about the role of “business” in society and show examples of what our students and alumni are doing with their degrees so that more prospective students can envision themselves in similar positions.

And, as I mentioned, there are very few women business leaders compared to men, for a range of reasons. We see women balancing their roles as caregivers and career professionals, and workplace policies often lack the flexibility to allow women to effectively do this. Across the board, we see a lack of paid flexible leave policies.

Again, I want to emphasize that these issues are important and need to be addressed not just because they are “women’s issues,” but because organizations that have adopted and embraced diversity by measuring and bridging the gap are able to see positive differences in organizational performance.

Q: Tell us more about the disparity in wage of men and women in corporate America. How about the gap in promotion to c-level positions?

A: The statistics I’ve shared are loud and clear — we have less than 5 percent of Fortune 500 companies with women at the helm. Even after accounting for differences in education and seniority, women lag behind men in terms of compensation by 30 percent.

Q: What is Bauer doing to address these issues? What specific resources are available to female students, and what actions are the college taking to help shape change at the corporate level?

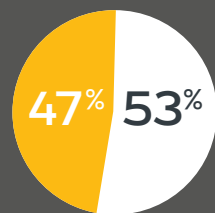
A: We are working on three levels.

First, our faculty are engaged in research to address these issues so we can better understand the problem and work to address it. We have developed a website

By the Numbers

30%

more women graduate college than men in the United States



Women make up nearly half of the U.S. workforce



Less than 5% of Fortune 500 companies have female CEOs

Ten years into careers, women make

60%

less than their male colleagues

to showcase all faculty research and thought leadership that pertains to issues affecting working women and working families (bauer.uh.edu/workingfamilies).

Second, we are working with our staff to determine gaps in terms of recruiting more women into our business school and flexibility in program structure that will make it easier for working women and men to attend school and graduate.

Third, we are also working with businesses in Houston through the Bauer College Board to take this message to industry and work on the initiative so that it drives impact and makes a difference. This initiative cannot be confined to the business school. It is not just a good topic for research or merely the right thing to talk about — it is a business necessity, and to the extent that companies are not adopting flexible policies, we need to show them what they are missing out on.

Q: You’ve said that the best way to address inequality is education. Tell us more about what that means to you as dean of Bauer College.

A: I’ll start again with some numbers. Today in the United States, one of our biggest challenges is the inequality in income distribution. Interestingly we find that this perpetuates — in other words, children born into wealth become wealthy and those born into poverty stay there.

The biggest differentiator between the groups is their level of education. Economists who study this find that inequality in wages largely stems from the differences in education — the growing difference in earnings of college graduates and high school graduates explains 60 to 70 percent of the increase in wage inequality between 1980 and 2005.

Education, in my mind, is the ultimate equalizer. Unfortunately, it is also true that students are more likely to attend and graduate from college — way more likely — if their parents did.

At Bauer College we are trying to reverse this — whether or not your parents attended college, if we can help you create opportunity, study and graduate, we can do our part in your success.

We have a lot of students who are the first in their families to attend college, and we have firsthand experience to show that we can and we do help these students succeed, graduate and do very well in their professional careers.

In this sense, we are moving the needle for the group that matters. Our goal is always to create lifelong

learners. We teach our students to “learn how to learn” so they never have obsolete skills. We want to help our students not just find jobs but to create jobs and opportunity for themselves and others.

Q: Earlier, you described what you call “subconscious biases” that women may face in the workplace. Tell us more about how this can play out, both from women and men.

A: We have for the most part moved away from what I would say are “obvious” biases. Our workplace cultures — the way we treat each other and the way we handle differences — have moved quite a bit from where they used to be.

What we have now, for the most part I believe, are subconscious biases — for example, in an effort to accommodate a female employee with little kids, am I not offering them a promotion that will require late evenings at work or do I hesitate to ask a female employee to travel or go on a foreign assignment under the premise that it involves time away from their family and children? And, would a supervisor have the same considerations for male employees with similar circumstances?

While our intentions are good, we may be fostering paths for promotion that subconsciously lead to males being given tougher assignments, which in turn lead to more avenues for promotion.

Q: What role and responsibility do men have in expanding opportunities for women in business?

Great question. I think that this conversation is really about men and women working together. As much as we need female role models, we need men to recognize these issues so we can work on them together.

In my career, I have had the privilege of being groomed by male role models who sponsored me and took an interest in helping me. It is really about talent. Organizations need to groom talent and everyone in the organization — men and women — needs to be a part of this conversation.

Q: How have you personally seen the business environment for women change over the last decade or so? What changes do you see for the next 10 years?

A: I think we have moved away from explicit differences in treatment, and civility in the workplace is something we take very seriously and enforce. We

are more accepting of differences, and to that extent we have all grown. We teach kids about diversity in schools and that it is something that they should carry into the workplace.

The next 10 years will, in my mind, be about seeing the true potential of a workplace come to light through flexible work leave policies that help both working women and men succeed.

The number of men choosing to stay at home while their wives go to work is increasing. In Europe the length of maternity and paternity leaves are significant and certainly longer than what we have in the U.S. We’re also seeing more high-profile companies in the U.S. adopt these kinds of policies — Netflix, Microsoft, Airbnb and Vodafone come to mind.

When you add to this the millennial generation that seeks more meaning from work, I think we will see big changes in the next 10 years. The changes will make the agenda for working women and working families evolve into a business imperative rather than a box to check off.

Q: What kind of culture do you want to create at Bauer, in terms of inclusion and opportunity for women?


A: I want Bauer to be a haven for inclusion in all respects. In many ways, academia is all about inclusion — academia goes where industry cannot. Research empowers us to tell the truth however uncomfortable that might be.

In addition, the fact that we are in Houston is a huge advantage. This is a truly internationally diverse city, not just in its population metrics but also in terms of our leaders and the fact that the energy industry is here. Houston is all about a meritocracy, which works because it is based on merit — no gender, no race or color, or anything else, pure merit.


At the end of the day, the agenda that we discussed at the White House to me is all about the story of our students. It is the story of every student at Bauer who graduates from a program ranked for its diversity. It is the story of our graduates who go on to work mostly in Houston, an economy which is a meritocracy. It is the story of every Bauer College student.

Q: What advice do you have for young women pursuing a business education and career?

A: Know your strengths, work on your weakness, and don’t let anyone tell you that you cannot do it. Dream big.



"KNOW YOUR
STRENGTHS,
WORK ON YOUR
WEAKNESS,
AND DON'T LET
ANYONE TELL
YOU THAT YOU
CANNOT DO IT."





A FIERCE LEADER

Bauer's Head of Business Operations Shares Six Women Who Changed Her Life

By Sara Brown (Intro by Jessica Navarro)

As a Bauer College staff member who has risen through the ranks during her nearly 17-year career, Sara Brown (BS '99, MBA '02) has had the opportunity to grow into a leadership role at an organization that feels like home.

Now the college's executive director of operations, Brown oversees all aspects of how Bauer functions as a business. She is responsible for producing the college budget each year, monitoring all revenues and expenses, overseeing payroll and personnel, supervising business staff and ensuring sound business practices within the college.

Although Brown's work is high pressure, she relieves stress by spending time with her family (including husband Donny and children Ashlin and Jayton) and in the gym — she's a regular at her local 9Round Fitness, often knocking out kickboxing circuit training before heading home in the evenings.

And, when she needs inspiration, Brown often looks to other women in her life who embody qualities she admires, both professionally and personally. Here, she shares with us six women who've changed her life.

Ronan Thompson's Mom, blogger

Through her writing on rockstarronan.com, Maya Thompson unleashed her fury and anguish after losing Ronan to neuroblastoma at age 4. She never tried to mitigate the biting edge of her grief, even when it alienated her and amplified the pain for her friends, family and fans. What has resulted is a deluge of support and beauty, including worldwide attention to

childhood cancer. Maya taught me that taking pain head-on can be much more potent than assuaging it.

Jennifer O'Connell, EVP of Alternative Programming, Lionsgate

Jennifer has had an accomplished career in media by any standard, but the remarkable part is that she is well known for her incredibly kind and compassionate leadership style. So often, women are told that in order to succeed in business, there is no room for "nice." I am moved by Jennifer's influence in unbundling the word "nice" from the words "soft" and "weak." She is paving a path for leaders of any gender to lead with their hearts.

Patricia Tyler, my mom

She struggled with infertility for years, all the while investing her love in children as an elementary school teacher. In April 1976, Pat received a call from the county welfare department that a baby girl born on Easter Sunday was in need of a family. I came home to her when I was 5 days old, and until I had a name, she called me Bunny! Fortunately for me, the name didn't stick and my luck had changed for the rest of my life. Of all the lessons my mom has schooled me in the past 39 years, the first was that sometimes the best outcomes are simply the result of fate.

Allie Brosh, author and illustrator

Allie has a gift of finding humor in even the most tragic or embarrassing circumstances. She has no problem painting herself in an unflattering

manner, if the result is hilarity. Through Allie's work, I've learned that there is little in life that can't be laughed at. And everyone feels better after a good giggle!

Katie John Tucker, literary character

In elementary school, I continuously reread the Katie John series by Mary Calhoun. Those books were very reassuring to me, in that a headstrong, adventurous, often-in-trouble tomboy was valuable enough to be a main character. Katie John gave me confidence to be myself, especially in the ways that were non-traditional.

Latha Ramchand, Bauer College dean and professor of finance (my "work mom")

Of course I considered that it may look contrived to include my boss in this list. But, to exclude her would be a blatant omission. For over eight years now, I've observed Dean Ramchand exhibit strength of character and tireless dedication to the Bauer College. In varying circumstances, I have learned immeasurably from her — I've seen her graciously accept praise, stoically withstand brutal criticism, bring laughter to groups of people large and small, quietly tutor those who are struggling, command conversations with her intellect and passionately defend those without a voice. It is a humbling privilege to work under a leader who propels herself and others toward greatness on a daily basis.



LEAPS AND BOUNDS

Bauer Professional MBA Program Jumps 14 Spots in Latest Ranking

By Amanda Sebesta

Bauer College's Professional MBA program is ranked No. 15 nationally among public institutions, according to Bloomberg BusinessWeek's Best Business Schools 2015.

The list includes Bauer's program as No. 38 overall and No. 15 among public institutions in the ranking of Part-Time MBA programs in the United States. The overall ranking jumped 14 spots since the previous list released in 2013.

"Bauer College students, programs and faculty continue to embody the power and excellence of the University of Houston and the City of Houston," Graduate and Professional Programs Assistant Dean Steven Koch said. "And the community, our peers, our students and our alumni have recognized that."

Bloomberg Businessweek bases its rankings on a two-part survey of students and alumni, who provide feedback on their experience, job satisfaction, employment and compensation. Part-time MBA programs, Bloomberg says, require flexibility and should provide a graduate with a degree that allows for career advancement.

“
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”

Bauer's Professional MBA program is designed to give students a foundation in each of the functional areas of business before allowing them to choose electives for areas of specialization. The flexible program enrolls in both the spring and the fall, with students completing their degrees on average in 22 months.

"We continue to focus on adding value to the student experience while ensuring that the Bauer MBA is more valuable in the marketplace than ever," Koch added. "We will continue to innovate and lead through example for this part of the country."

A WORLD TO EXPLORE

Nation's Top High School Students Vie for Spot at Bauer Summer Camps

By Jessica Navarro and Amanda Sebesta

Bauer College opened a world of opportunity to top high school students from across the United States this summer through EXPLORE, a series of three residential camps focusing on sales and marketing, entrepreneurship, and energy and sustainability.

Each week, a different program from the college partnered with Bauer's Office of Undergraduate Business Programs to give participants the chance to learn more about college life and business school.

"We want to provide potential students the tools they need to make a decision to continue their education," said Joyce Williams, a program director in Undergraduate Business Programs who oversees EXPLORE.

She added: "By providing this kind of hands-on experience early, they can see that a business degree is about more than spreadsheets and reports. The things we teach at Bauer can apply to everyone."

After just three years, the EXPLORE program has proven valuable for participants. In its first year, the program drew a modest number of local applicants, but in 2015, the college received nearly 500 applications from across 14 states, including 43 cities across Texas, ultimately selecting 107 students.

We spoke to three students who each participated in one of this summer's EXPLORE camps to learn more about what the experience meant to them.

Mojola Balogun

*High School Junior
Strake Jesuit College Preparatory (Houston)*

Although Mojola Balogun already planned to pursue a business degree, his week with EXPLORE at Bauer showed the value of teamwork, collaboration and authenticity.

"I believe that business is the best way to communicate your ideas to the world, and I have lots of ideas to share," Balogun said. "Because of the flexibility of a business degree, I would have the ability to specialize in several things, instead of being locked up in one subject area."

The faculty at Bauer's Wolff Center for Entrepreneurship who led the EXPLORE Entrepreneurship session provided takeaways that will stay with Balogun long after college, he said.

"If I could describe all I learned in two sentences, I would say, 'In order to succeed in business, and pretty much anything else, you must not lose a sense of who you are and what you believe in. Good habits and qualities are just a result of that central idea,'" Balogun added.

Lauren Krupczak

*High School Senior
Holy Spirit Preparatory School (Atlanta)*

A week in Houston gave Atlanta native Lauren Krupczak confirmation that her future will include a life in sales.

"It wasn't until this camp that I realized how much I enjoy business," she said. "I fell in love with the idea of having dinner with clients, conducting sales calls and presenting proposals to businesses."

Staff and faculty from Bauer's Program for Excellence in Selling led the EXPLORE Sales & Marketing camp.

"They really taught me how to present myself concisely and in a professional way, mainly through the 30-second competitions," Krupczak said. "I learned how to form my ideas in a coherent and eloquent way in order to show my best side when talking to a client or future employer."

Mit Mehta

*High School Sophomore
William B. Travis High School (Richmond, TX)*

Mit Mehta may still be in high school, but he's already thinking globally.

"Energy is a global issue that needs to be addressed now and in the future," he said. "I knew the camp would teach me the basics of energy while preparing me for the future."

He added: "I was very excited to attend a college camp and learn from people who have a lot of experience."

The session was led by faculty from Bauer's Global Energy Management Institute, many of whom have worked for decades as leaders in the energy industry.

"During the camp, I realized the true science behind nonrenewable and renewable energy, which we investigated very thoroughly, and how important these resources are to find the supply and match its demand, going back to business," Mehta added.



EXPLORE Sales @ Marketing



EXPLORE Entrepreneurship

105

NUMBER OF
EXPLORE
APPLICATIONS
FROM 2013

3

NUMBER OF
STATES
REPRESENTED
IN 2013

500

NUMBER OF
EXPLORE
APPLICATIONS
FROM 2015

14

NUMBER OF
STATES
REPRESENTED
IN 2015



EXPLORE Energy @ Sustainability



(EM)POWERING THE FUTURE

National Association of Women MBAs Recognizes Bauer Students, Staff

By Amanda Sebasta

Celebrating successes and improving the future for women in business was the mission of hundreds of female MBA students and business professionals, including representatives from Bauer College, during this fall's National Association of Women MBAs (NAWMBA) 2015 Conference and Career Fair.

Held in October in Houston, the three-day event included networking and personal development through keynotes, speaker presentations, panel discussions and an on-site career fair.

During the event, the organization recognized Bauer's NAWMBA student chapter as Student Chapter of the Year, based on membership increase, community

service, and dedication and excellence in bringing value to the organization.

"Our student chapter is very humbled and honored to have received this award," said MBA candidate Lola Soyebó Harris, president of NAWMBA at Bauer. "We certainly acknowledge the great leadership of the officers before us and strive to continually build upon what has been accomplished."

Bauer College served as a co-lead academic sponsor for the event. The college's Rockwell Career Center Assistant Dean Jamie Belinne emceed the opening ceremony of the conference, and Executive Professor Amy Vandaveer led a session on personal branding.

Bauer's National Association of Women MBAs (NAWMBA) was recognized as Student Chapter of the Year at the National NAWMBA Conference.



Lisa Jammer, who is Bauer's senior director of graduate and alumni career services, served as conference chair. She was also recognized with NAWMBA's "Shero" Award, which is given to an outstanding woman who exemplifies excellence in the organization, in the workplace, and in the community.

"I am honored to be recognized by an outstanding group of women with ties back to major global companies," Jammer said. "My recognition is a win for both myself and Bauer College."

Jammer, who was recently elected to the National Board of Directors to serve a three-year term, added that having a strong professional organization like NAWMBA is important in creating opportunities for women in business.

"Women still face a number of professional challenges ranging from lack of representation in corporate board positions to pay disparity. NAWMBA creates an avenue for discussions on these challenges while creating opportunities for networking, mentoring and career development," she said. "I was proud to watch many of my Bauer students connect with employers and interview for global job opportunities."



NAWMBA CREATES AN AVENUE FOR DISCUSSIONS ON THESE CHALLENGES WHILE CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR NETWORKING, MENTORING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT.

—LISA JAMMER

Bauer senior director of graduate and alumni career services



A CAPITAL EXPERIENCE

Bauer Students Live, Learn and Intern in Washington, D.C.

By Sarayu Sundar

Bauer College students often graduate with experience from several internships in a wide range of industries, from energy to healthcare — a natural advantage of pursuing a business degree in the nation's fourth largest city.

And, over the last three years, the college has given a select group of students the opportunity to broaden their internship experiences with a semester living, learning and interning in Washington, D.C.

Coordinated by Bauer Honors Academic Advisor Colleen Davies, the Bauer in D.C. Internship Program is a competitive program that selects highly qualified students to pursue a semester-long internship in the nation's capital.

"This is not only a professional opportunity for our students, but an academic and personal one, too," Davies said.

The internship is just one aspect of the D.C. experience for Bauer students, she added. The college pays for all of the students' housing, in historic apartment homes just minutes away from the U.S. Capitol building.

"I liked to walk from our apartment down to the reflecting pool and watch the sun setting over all of the monuments," said Sarah Lastovica (BBA '15), part of the Spring 2014 class of Bauer in D.C. interns.

And, the students complete coursework while in D.C., in order to maintain timely progress towards earning their degrees. Often, they undertake independent study

projects that align with their internship experiences. In doing so, Davies said, they are able to connect their practical experiences back to classroom fundamentals learned at Bauer.

All of the Bauer in D.C. interns emphasize the close connection between their academic preparedness from Bauer and their internship experiences.

"You're actually out there in the field, talking to politicians who put into place those laws you learned about in class and that you'll be using in the financial markets," said Jason John (BBA '14, MS ACCY '15), who was part of the first group of Bauer in D.C. interns in 2013.

Anjola Coker (BBA '15), part of the Spring 2015 class of Bauer in D.C. interns, echoed this sentiment, explaining her role as an intern with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

"I had done other internships in the past, but this was the first time I was able to directly apply the knowledge I had gained in my classes at Bauer, like audit, to my work," she said.

In addition to the professional development and learning, the program has a transformative effect on participants personally.

"Being there, in Washington, D.C., as a student and an intern is so advantageous," said Tracy Do (BBA '14), a 2013 intern. "You really have to force yourself to step out of your comfort zone and speak up, and be a voice for change."



ENGAGING INVOLVEMENT

Passion, Purpose Ignite Bauer College Alumni Association

By Amanda Sebesta

For more information on these events and the Bauer College Alumni Association, visit bauer.uh.edu/alumni.

For many working professionals, it can be difficult to find a spare moment for anything outside of the routine. You likely know how it is — go to work, come home, go to bed, repeat.

But for members of the Bauer College Alumni Association (BCAA), it's critical to carve out time to support the Houston community and their alma mater. This year's roster of BCAA board members are committed to getting involved and giving back, and their passion for Bauer is quickly spreading throughout the college's alumni base.

"There are so many opportunities for recent alumni to get involved," said Michelle Alvarez (BBA '13), who serves as BCAA's community service co-chair. "We have various committees where alumni can come and participate. Anything you can do to get involved, do it."

In addition to BCAA, alumni can now participate in the college's newly created Young Alumni Board, which leverages the growing number of recent Bauer graduates in the area and gives them the opportunity to weigh in on new Bauer initiatives.

"This experience has been amazing for me," said Brandee Chevanintakul (BBA '14, MS ACCY '15), a member of the Young Alumni Board. "I am able to be in the student's shoes to see what the other side looks like. From that perspective, I know how passionate I should be to make a difference."



Ted Bauer Golf Classic

Since 2001, Bauer alumni have organized the Ted Bauer Golf Classic, which raises funds for Bauer College student scholarships.



Networking Breakfast Series

Each month, BCAA holds networking breakfasts that draw large numbers of alumni, corporate partners and supporters, as business leaders from the Houston community share their experiences as guest speakers.



Annual Meeting

Each year, the BCAA holds an annual meeting where all alumni are invited back to campus for a look at the past year for BCAA and the college, and to see what is on the horizon.

UH Football Tailgates

Bauer alumni meet to cheer on the UH football team and network before every home game at TDECU Stadium.

Cougar Power Hour

This bi-monthly networking opportunity allows current students and alumni to meet and make business connections.



LENDING A HELPING HAND

Bauer and UH Alumni Join Together to Give Back

By Amanda Sebasta

Nearly 1,000 Bauer alumni, student organization members and the UH community come together each year in September at the Houston Food Bank for the 9/11 National Day of Service.

In its fourth year, the local initiative, hosted by the Bauer College Alumni Association, experienced a record-breaking volunteer count, nearly doubling totals from 2014 and more than doubling the number of meals assembled, packaging 21,980 meals for those in need in the local community.

Student organizations included the Asian Business Student Association, Finance Association, Women's Energy Network and Beta Alpha Psi, as well as students from the Ted Bauer Leadership Certificate Program. Alumni from the UH Engineering Alumni Association, the Technology Alumni Association and the UH Hispanic Alumni Association also participated.

Next year's Day of Service is slated for September 10, 2016.





DJ Freddy Cruz is celebrating 10 years at Houston's 104.1 KRBE this year. He started his career in radio while he finished his bachelor's degree at Bauer College in 2001.



RUN THE WORLD

**Bauer
Alumnus
Connects
with Listeners
as On-Air DJ
for 104.1 KRBE**

Story by Jessica Navarro, Photos by Nicki Evans

BAUER

College alumnus Freddy Cruz may not seem to have much in common with the classmates who graduated with him in 2001.

Instead of a suit and tie, he wears Converse and jeans to work. And in place of a desk in a corner office, he does his work behind a sound board and a microphone.

But as an on-air personality and image director for 104.1 KRBE in Houston, Cruz is at heart a businessman who sees his listeners as customers.

This year, he's celebrating 10 years at the station and a radio career of nearly two decades. At the start of his first job in radio in the late 90s, he pursued an undergraduate degree in radio/TV/film but quickly realized that a business degree would give him a broader knowledge base.

"At the time, I had an internship at a radio station, handing out bumper stickers and working for free, as most interns do, and the DJ told me, 'Hey, you already have a job in radio. If you want to run the world, go to business school.'"

"Run the world" might have been a broad goal, but since graduating from Bauer with a BBA in marketing, Cruz has found significant success professionally and personally.

He's gone from an unpaid internship in radio to being one of Houston's most recognizable on-air talents and the man behind the scenes who produces promos and commercials for KRBE and two sister stations, WABD in Mobile, AL and The Vibe in Kansas City, KS.

"I love everything about what I do," he said. "Sometimes I wake up in the morning and know exactly what I want to share with my listeners that day, and I'm so excited. That's when I have to tell myself, 'Slow down, you have to get out of bed and get ready, bro.'"

Although his show starts at 10 a.m., Cruz arrives to the KRBE studios in the Westchase district a couple

hours early to prepare content for the 15 or so "breaks" in-between songs and commercials, when he gets to talk to listeners. He employs a marketer's sensibility when he decides what and how he wants to communicate to his audience.

"I've got to make sure that each break counts," Cruz said. "Am I informing my listener? Am I entertaining my listener? Am I interacting with my listener? Am I doing all three? I make sure all the breaks are doing something to engage with my audience and delivering the best content I possibly can."

Listeners have come to love Cruz's brand of talk. He is a familiar and friendly voice, giving the feeling that he's chatting with friends, asking about their workday and families, mixed with snippets of conversation about food ("especially if it's deep-fried or has a lot of cheese stuffed in it," he said), football and celebrities. And, the Revolutionary Era buff can sometimes sneak in a factoid or two about his favorite period of history.

After his show finishes at 1 p.m., he takes a quick coffee break and then heads into his production studio to begin his imaging duties, writing and recording commercials to promote the three stations.

His workdays don't end there. In the evenings, after helping his daughters with homework and eating dinner with his family, Cruz often wraps up projects in his home studio.

"It really helps with the balance," he said. "I set hard hours so I can pick the kids up from school on time, and then I can finish everything that needs to get done later in the day."

Cruz applied a similar approach during his days as a business student, when he was also working full-time at KRBE, covering the Sunday-into-Monday overnight on-air schedule and answering phones during the day. He ambitiously registered for 12 hours of marketing and management classes, including one on Mondays and Wednesdays that started at 8:30 a.m.

"So, I worked midnight to 5:30 a.m., slept for about an hour and a half, and then I went straight to class," he said. "After that, I'd sleep for two hours and then go back to KRBE to answer phones from 2-6 p.m."

Despite the frantic pace, Cruz excelled in his classes that semester while paying his dues in the radio business. And, later in his collegiate career, he met his now-wife, Monica, in an accounting class.

“Meeting artists and celebrities is cool, but it’s not the coolest part of the gig. I really like hanging out with Houstonians.”

I get so excited to share really cool stuff with my listeners.”





**Bauer alumnus
Freddy Cruz
is applying his
business skills
to a successful
radio career.**



“The best thing about accounting for me was meeting my wife,” Cruz said. “I sat on the opposite side of the auditorium from her, and it took me two-and-a-half weeks to muster up enough courage to talk to her.”

They married in 2001, which proved to be a memorable year for Cruz in many ways — he graduated from Bauer and made plans to move to Minneapolis the following year to take a full-time imaging director position at a station there.

“I was there exactly three years, and then I came back to Houston because I couldn’t get enough KRBE,” Cruz said.

He’s been in his current role at KRBE since 2005, and although working in radio presents the opportunity to meet musicians and celebrities, he says that isn’t what keeps him in the business.

“Do I meet a lot of famous people? Yes. Do I meet a lot of famous people and party with them at late night raves every night? No. But, I can say this — every day at KRBE is different. I love this job with all my heart,” Cruz said.

He added: “Meeting artists and celebrities is cool, but it’s not the coolest part of the gig. I really like hanging out with Houstonians. I get so excited to share really cool stuff with my listeners.”

For Cruz, life is a constant loop of learning and teaching, which he gets to cultivate at work with his audience and at home with his family.

“Never stop learning,” he said. “When school’s over, it’s not really over. You’re not technically walking in to Bauer College after you get your diploma, but the world is going to change with or without you. Learning has never been easier and knowledge is literally in the palm our hands!”

The best way to keep up, according to Cruz, is old fashioned hard work.

“Always outwork everyone,” he said. “That doesn’t necessarily mean that you should work 90-hours a week immediately, but always remember that there is always someone trying to outwork you. And always volunteer to do the things that nobody else wants to do. Then do those things as if your career depended on them.”

On Another Note



Freddy the Foodie

“My favorite thing about Houston is my favorite thing, period — food. You could spend five years eating at a new restaurant every day and still not hit up all of the awesome joints in town.” The native Houstonian gives us his top five picks for good eats in town.

1

BERNIE'S
BURGER BUS



2 Eatsie Boys

3 Pronto Cucinino

4 La Finca Mexican
Restaurant

5 Qin Dynasty



TIES THAT BIND

Bauer Alumna, Now a Corporate Attorney, Learned Life Lessons from Hardworking Entrepreneurial Family

By Wendell Brock

With her large Italian and Mexican families, Nina Bianchi Skinner (MBA, JD '01) was never at a loss for playmates or mentors.

Her favorite memories are of long summer days at her great-grandparents' house in Tampico, Mexico, where she spent hours greeting neighbors, listening to uncles tell stories and playing soccer with cousins. In the evenings she would sit with her mother and grandma under the mango trees, where they would gather with friends to visit.

Close friendships were a natural part of daily life — as was imparting words of wisdom. Often by the end of

the day, the talk would turn to life lessons and dreams of the future. As she sat on her mother's lap counting the stars, she recalls being told: "You have to do well in school. It's the key to your future."

Those simple words resonated with her then as much as they do now.

Such lessons — on the importance of hard work and education, on building meaningful relationships that bridge the personal and the professional — are at the heart of who Skinner is today: lawyer, Hispanic community member, wife, mom.

Nina Bianchi Skinner (MBA, JD '01) serves as a corporate attorney and shareholder at Liskow @ Lewis, a firm with offices in Houston, New Orleans and Lafayette.

After earning her MBA and her law degree simultaneously at Bauer College and the University of Houston Law Center, she spent 13 years learning the finer points of business law at the Houston firm Fulbright & Jaworski (now Norton Rose Fulbright).

Today, she's a corporate attorney and shareholder in the Houston office of Liskow & Lewis, a Gulf Coast law firm that focuses on the energy industry.

But before she tells you about her career, Skinner likes to talk about her roots, how she was shaped by her hard-working, business-owner parents. Her real training was in an East Houston warehouse, where she worked side by side with her family in their modest business: manufacturing and selling industrial work boots. As a teen, she logged late nights and weekends pitching in.

Growing up in this entrepreneurial family, she says, "empowered me to know from an early age that I had the ability within myself to build something of value." At the same time, she began to see firsthand how professional relationships pay off — whether it was the leather broker in Mexico, the import-export agent at the airport, the refinery worker buying boots at the store.

But above all else, her No. 1 job was to excel at school.

Fortunately, her grades allowed her to attend a well-respected high school. The first in her family to attend college, she received a full scholarship to Southern Methodist University and later transferred to Tulane University, where she graduated magna cum laude with a B.S. in Finance. In New Orleans, she worked as an intern with Black & Decker and was responsible for promoting the brand's power and gardening tools in area Wal-Mart stores.

She recalls (with a bit of a laugh) scooting around the Big Easy in her aqua Suzuki Samurai with a trunk full of pumpkins. Her job was to teach shoppers to carve pumpkins using jigsaws.

In high school and college, Skinner gained exposure to the energy industry, which was distinct from the family business she knew so intimately. "Growing up in Houston, the energy business was everywhere, but it was not a business I understood," she says.

After graduating UH, she clerked at and was later hired by Fulbright & Jaworski, where she proved nimble at mergers and acquisitions, corporate finance and securities matters. That made her an attractive candidate for Liskow & Lewis, an 80-year-old firm that established an energy presence out of its New Orleans and

Lafayette offices. The firm opened its Houston base in 2005 with a handful of attorneys and today employs approximately 35.

At Liskow & Lewis, Skinner handles M&As and financial transactions, for both energy and non-energy businesses, and has a specialty practice representing companies in derivatives matters. "Derivatives is a niche that has developed for me over the years," she says. "It is quite dynamic given the regulatory changes under Dodd-Frank."

Back to her higher education, Skinner was excited about pursuing a joint graduate degree after studying business at Tulane. Though she had good offers from other institutions, she chose UH because of its focus on energy. It also allowed her to help her parents.

In addition to exploring the energy-related classes at UH, she was drawn to courses that related to her parents' business. "Because my family made boots, my natural interests were in manufacturing. In business school, some of my favorite classes involved operations and management." She thinks the biggest advantage over the long haul has been the networking opportunities offered by Bauer.

"Being local has proven to be a tremendous benefit," says Skinner, who is active in the Women's Business Alliance of the Greater Houston Partnership and Houston's Hispanic Lawyers Network. (She is married to Tulsa native Stephen Skinner, who works in the healthcare industry, and is the mother of Matthew, 7, Rebecca, 6, and Madeleine, 3.) "Every few months I reconnect with someone who was in one of my classes at UH. With technology we can easily be in touch with colleagues around the world, but it is so nice to be in Houston and have the chance to meet for lunch."

When you think about it, it all goes back to the mango trees in Mexico, her family, their business and the values she learned as a young woman encouraged, and determined, to succeed.

“

**MAINTAINING
RELATIONSHIPS,
KEEPING UP
WITH PEOPLE,
RECONNECTING
WITH PEOPLE: IT'S
IMPORTANT TO MY
JOB. BUT IT'S PART
OF WHO I AM.**

”





TENACIOUS TASTE

ENTREPRENEURSHIP ALUMNA ENERGIZES
NEW BRAUNFELS FOOD SCENE WITH
TEX-EUROPEAN RESTAURANT

STORY BY:

Jessica Navarro and
Amanda Sebesta

PHOTOS BY:

Nicki Evans



Recent Bauer College alumna Rashmi Bhat (BBA '14) discovered her career path early in life, although she didn't know it at the time. "Food' was my first word as a baby," she said. "In the back of my mind, I always knew I wanted a restaurant."

But, that didn't become clear until she completed her undergraduate program at Bauer last year.

"I graduated with three job offers," Bhat said. "I came home to New Braunfels to decide on which offer, but I realized that I wanted to open my restaurant."

Never one to take things slowly, she worked right away to launch Bonjour Texas! in New Braunfels. The dedication she applied in building her business is characteristic of Bhat, who eagerly explored every opportunity she was presented during her student experience at Bauer.

She completed Bauer's Wolff Center for Entrepreneurship program, including a first place win in the 2014 Giants Entrepreneurship Challenge Business Plan Competition, and the Ted Bauer Leadership Certificate Program. She also won the college's CougarPitch competition and served on the inaugural year of Bauer's Cougar Venture Fund. And, in 2013, Bhat founded FemCity UH, a business-oriented organization for female entrepreneurs.

"I wanted to grab every opportunity where I had the choice to say, 'Certainly I can,'" Bhat said, referring to a quote from Theodore Roosevelt that has become her mantra — "Whenever you are asked if you can do a job, tell 'em, 'Certainly I can!' Then get busy and find out how to do it."

Bhat was inspired by the delis and restaurants that she enjoyed with her family during her childhood years in France and Europe. She and her parents collaborated with European chefs and Texas foodie friends to create the Bonjour Texas! menu, including premium quality ingredients, sourced both locally (artisan breads and baguettes from a local bakery) and from Europe (gruyere cheese from France, Swiss cheese from Switzerland).

Just a year into business, Bonjour Texas! has received positive customer feedback on review sites like Yelp and TripAdvisor, and Bhat continues to build her customer base with an active social media presence.

Even though she is a young business owner at just 22, Bhat is learning to assert herself and build a team.

"When you're running a restaurant, it can be hard at first telling someone what to do, especially when they're older than you are, but you learn to deal with those small issues and get the job done," Bhat said.

Eventually, Bhat hopes to open another restaurant, this one with an Indian menu. The restaurant industry can be a bit of a rollercoaster, she said, but with the support of her family and friends, along with her passion for food, she's pursuing something she has loved all her life.

"I love what we do, and I love bringing new ideas," Bhat said. "It is a lot of work, but if you don't love it, don't do it."

JUST LAST YEAR, RASHMI BHAT (BBA '14) OPENED BONJOUR TEXAS!, IN NEW BRAUNFELS, OFFERING EUROPEAN FOODS WITH A TEXAS TWIST.

“IT IS A LOT OF WORK,
BUT IF YOU DON'T
LOVE IT,
DON'T DO IT.”



QUEEN OF NFL RETAIL

Bauer Alumna Moves From Accounting to a Top Role in Football League's
Consumer Products Department

By Wendell Brock





As vice president of the NFL's consumer products department, Natara Holloway (BBA '98) is in charge of brand, marketing and retail development — what she describes as “retail-tainment.”

Natara Holloway (BBA '98) didn't move from Houston to New York to work for the National Football League because she was a die-hard football fan. She did it because she had a passion for accounting and auditing — and had for a very long time.

“This will be very embarrassing,” Holloway jokes at the top of an interview about her life, her education, and her recent adventures in NFL retail. “There was an accounting team in high school, and I was a part of it.”

That's how, at a young age, the bubbly and spirited Holloway charted a path to success.

Looking back on her time at the University of Houston, the Bauer College alumna believes the experience offered her own extraordinary entrée into the city's dynamic business community. On the threshold of graduating with a degree in — you guessed it — accounting, Holloway scored an internship with Exxon, parlayed that into a full-time position with the oil-and-gas giant (now ExxonMobil) and honed skills that would make her a smart “trade” from the world of energy to the inner ranks of professional football.

In her 11 years with the NFL, Holloway has cut a swath through the sports organization's

internal audit, corporate development and consumer products divisions. Today, she is the vice president in charge of brand, marketing and retail development for the league's consumer products department. Her role: To engage fans with compelling consumer experiences — to put the “fun” in the process of buying those Houston Texans coffee mugs, Atlanta Falcons toddler beanies and New York Giants earrings.

“You could always get a hat and a T-shirt,” Holloway explains of her mandate to broaden the NFL retail appeal. “Now you might get a hat, a T-shirt and an autograph. Or you might

dance or see some entertainment while you shop. We like to call it 'retail-tainment.' So it's more about engaging with the fans and making sure it's a memory — not just a transaction."

If anyone can put pizzazz in the NFL shopping bag, that would be Holloway. A military brat who was born in Germany but considers Texas home, she punctuates her conversation with infectious laughter and lives to prove that "successful people can be nice."

"One of my old bosses used to call me the Oprah of the NFL," says Holloway, who keeps a "personal board of directors" on call for when she needs guidance and support.

As a kid, the retail-preneurial Holloway created shops in her home and made her family buy back clothes and jewelry they had given her as gifts. When her older sister took her on a college visit to UH, she fell in love with the city and the campus.

"It was absolutely beautiful. And I just thought Houston was so interesting, because I always knew I wanted to go into business. It has so many Fortune 500 companies. The opportunities are just abundant there. It was a no-brainer for me, an absolute no-brainer."

It was probably a no-brainer for Exxon to scoop up this bright and articulate accounting major — first as an intern, then as an employee. Holloway was president of the UH chapter of the National Association of Black Accountants and graduated magna cum laude.

After her internship with the multinational oil and gas company, she was brought in as an inventory accountant. "I basically counted barrels of domestic crude oil for two years," she says with typical candor. In her six years with the company, she worked as a cost accountant, led the inventory group during the merger with Mobil and finished up in the downstream audit group.

All of which made her a prime candidate for the NFL.

With NFL business booming, "they wanted to have more controls and put a robust audit practice in place," she says. As it turned out, the experience was a "phenomenal way to get to know the organization," Holloway says, because she was required to oversee the audit of every department. (Having a daughter work for the NFL also made her dad very happy.)

During a stint in the strategy group, Holloway was asked to write a plan for a potential retail business. "They were like: 'OK, you wrote the strategy. Now go run it.'"

In her consumer products role, Holloway has focused on making the retail operation more attractive to certain segments of the market — women, for instance.

One project she's proud of is producing the first-ever NFL pop-up store for women. A month before the start of the 2010 New Orleans Saints season, Holloway's group opened a pop-up on Magazine Street. The experiment was so successful it earned the NFL Commissioner's Innovation Award.

"We had products for females for years, but they weren't receiving the attention they deserved," Holloway says. "But the way we showcased and highlighted them, they were like, 'Oh, you guys have new products,' and so it was really about change in the retail experience, and how females consumed the NFL." Since then, her team has created marketing campaigns focused on men's lifestyle, juniors and "homegating."

If not for Bauer, Holloway believes she might not have had such a charmed career.

"I would not have done an internship had I gone to any other school," she says. "But I was right there with the businesses and could talk to them, and the career fairs that we had were tremendous. We had two floors worth of companies because it was in their backyard. I came to business with a whole different mindset because I had already been there, done that sort of thing. I had already networked with CEOs. I had already networked with vice presidents."



THE QUOTABLE NATARA HOLLOWAY

On why she studied accounting:

"I was like: 'I am going to be an accountant. That is the coolest profession ever. There is no other career where you get to count money.'"

On why she took a job with the NFL:

"I was looking to really expand my audit skills. I loved, loved, loved audit. It was weird. I always tell people: 'You cut me, I bleed numbers.'"

On being nice: "I was told (by a previous employer) that I could never succeed because I was too nice. So, it became my personal mission to kind of debunk that myth. I am a Christian, I feel like I am a nice person, and I don't feel like you have to be a bad person to succeed."

On the benefits of Bauer:

"I think the exposure I got at the University of Houston to different CEOs, different businesses and just understanding the business environment, is something that is kind of overlooked as a selling point for that school. You cannot get that at Texas A&M and UT, because you are not right there (in a city) with those businesses."



A GLOBAL LEADER

Alumnus Takes Career to New Heights with Hilti India Leadership Role

By Amanda Sebesta

Alim Hirani (BBA '04, PES '04, EMBA '08) has always had a passion for business.

When he hit the ground running in 2004 at Hilti as an account manager, he knew that his tenacity and ambition would lead him to great things.

It also didn't hurt that he gained additional skills from Bauer College's Program for Excellence in Selling.

Now, as he begins his journey as general manager of Hilti India, where he will lead over 700 people, Hirani has big aspirations for the company, including Hilti India being a top organization in the next five years. Here, he shares with us what led him to this point and where he goes from here.

Q: Did you always want to pursue a business degree?

A: I come from a family of entrepreneurs. My father has always had his own business, and from a young age, I always thought that I would go to business school.

Q: Did you see your career taking this path?

A: I would say that my ambition level has always been to lead people and to grow and develop. Did I anticipate it would happen this fast? I would say probably not, and that's a testament to Hilti as an organization and the fact that we have a culture of developing from within.

Q: Why was it important to get your Executive MBA?

A: I always thought about getting an EMBA for two reasons. First was to build a network of individuals that are like-minded and want to do more in their organizations — I thought the network that you could build from the program was profound. The second reason is what an EMBA does for me. It gave me the ability to further on in my career and to ask the right questions.

Q: How specifically did your EMBA help in your career?

A: In many ways, the EMBA came at a very good time. I was in my first leadership position,

and what it enabled me to do was understand that role. It enabled me to ask the right questions in tough situations and to have a broader business understanding of the various functions in the organization. Shortly after I got my EMBA, I started as a finance director for one of our marketing organizations, and I felt that it provided that platform for me.

Q: Why did you get involved in Bauer's Program for Excellence in Selling (PES)?

A: I was intrigued by the quality of the program and the professors, and I wanted to build a network with the external community and recruiters. I thought the program would enable me to improve my communication skills, network better and also learn how to sell. So, I applied to PES in 2003.

Q: What is the most valuable thing you learned from PES?

A: For me, ultimately it was important to understand the sales cycle used in business — you have to listen more and talk less. Learning that sales cycle, and how to use it professionally, ultimately enabled me to build a successful sales career.

Q: What words of encouragement would you give new Bauer students?

A: Don't settle. The sky is the limit. You set your own bar and push forward. Second, the college experience at Bauer is so much more than the education. It's about networking and relationships within Bauer, but also within the external community. The network you build here will go a long way, so network as much as you can with professors and sponsors, and don't settle. Be hungry, and keep pushing.

“

MY AMBITION LEVEL HAS ALWAYS BEEN TO LEAD PEOPLE AND TO GROW AND DEVELOP.

”

giving

A LIFE WORTH LIVING

Professor Emerita Recalls
Extraordinary Journey

By Jessica Navarro







Professor Emerita Bette Stead (Ed.D. '67) crafted the capital campaign needs assessment and plan that led to Charles T. "Ted" Bauer's \$40 million gift to name Bauer College.

Every corner of Bette Stead's home tells a story.

The framed wildlife photos are from her husband's trips to Africa. The vintage purses represent her travels to Greenland, Korea and Europe as a member of the Melody Maids, a women's chorus that performed for the military overseas during World War II.

The artifacts in shadow boxes are items found near her family's vacation home in Brazoria County. The prints and paintings, including some originals given to her by the artists, indicate an appreciation of the arts and culture.

But, the real story is Stead herself. She is a living piece of the Bauer College history books — as a faculty member in the late 90s, she created the proposal for a capital campaign that led to the \$40 million gift from Charles T. "Ted" Bauer in 2000 — and a key player in shaping the Houston business community through her work to establish the Federation of Houston Professional Women and the Greater Houston Business Ethics Roundtable.

When she recounts her role in these events, she is detailed and thorough, while remaining humble and unassuming. Each time she has led an effort for change, she said, it was the result of diligent research and planning.

"I'm very pragmatic. If I can't bite into it or measure it, I'm not interested in it," Stead said.

Stead's journey began in 1935, when she was born in San Antonio. Because her parents frequently traveled between New Orleans and New York for work, she was raised by her grandmother, Emma De Forest Stead (who she describes as "the kind of lady who could put her arms around you, and you just felt the whole world was all right") and her aunt, Lucy Ella Stead. They settled in Beaumont.

"It was the closest town to the Louisiana border that had a bus line, and we didn't have a car," Stead said. "We needed a bus line so my aunt could get back and forth to work."

Her aunt was a critical figure in her life, acting as both caretaker and the occasional push that Stead needed from her comfort zone.

"If there's anything about me that you want to talk about, it's because of her influence. She really opened up the world to me," Stead said, recalling the lessons her aunt insisted she get in swimming and roller skating.

She added: "I never could learn, but she was going to make sure I participated in life."

Stead has more than participated, amassing a wealth of experiences and connections over the course of her education and career. She earned a bachelor of business administration degree from Lamar University in 1957, followed by an MBA from the University of Texas in 1961. Lamar University named her a Distinguished Alumna in 2004 and the first woman member of their College of Business Hall of Fame in 2011.

She planned to end her schooling there and to find an entry-level corporate job where she could work her way up the career ladder.

"I went to some major companies and got turned down," Stead said. "My impression was they'd never seen a woman with an MBA. I was naïve. I thought if I had the qualifications, I could get a job."

She instead used her experience teaching at the high school level during graduate school to take an assistant professor job at Lamar. In 1964, the University of Houston became a public university, and with that, came tuition that Stead could afford to pursue a doctoral degree.

"I didn't know what else to do. I was in the driver's seat in terms of providing groceries for myself and my aunt, and I wanted a career path," she said. "At that time, we had a business education department in the college, and I knew the chairman, who said I could take 30 hours in the business school for an Ed.D."

She completed the program in 1967 and was then hired to teach in the business college at UH, a job she held for 34 years. She is now a professor emerita in Bauer's Department of Marketing & Entrepreneurship.

The experience of being turned down for a job based on gender wasn't one she soon forgot, though. She wrote and compiled the first edition of *Women in Management* in 1978, published by Prentice Hall, and used the textbook in a "Women in Administration" course at the college. In 1985, the second edition of the

book was published, and today, it is in the main reading room in the Library of Congress.

“It turned me into a feminist,” Stead said, noting that teaching male and female business students about women’s issues in the workplace was somewhat groundbreaking in the 70s and 80s.

“Women still were not getting a lot of jobs,” she added. “The way I tried to teach it was from an empirical standpoint. I didn’t teach a bunch of theory. Everything was based on facts, and I found role models around Houston — women entrepreneurs to come and talk to the class.”

Around that time, Stead extended her work outside the classroom, recognizing the need for a professional organization in Houston to give women access to networking and development opportunities.

“I knew we didn’t have a big enough women’s organization in Houston, but I thought if we could put together an umbrella group,” she said, reflecting on the first meeting to present a draft of constitution and bylaws for what is now the Federation of Houston Professional Women.

Stead also played an important role in forming another Houston professional organization that continues to thrive today, the Greater Houston Business Ethics Roundtable (GHER). As director of the college’s Institute for Business, Ethics and Public Issues in 1989, she presented her concept for a group that would bring together professionals from a range of companies and industries in Houston to discuss ethical operations and best practices. The idea generated little interest from businesses in the city, but when she brought it up again in 1995, the timing was right, and GHER was established.

“It just struck me it’d be nice if companies could get together and share best practices,” she said. “And corporations eventually realized they needed to talk to each other to see what they were doing.”

With nearly three decades on the UH campus under her belt, Stead began discussions in the late 90s with the business college administration and faculty about the need for a capital campaign to raise funds for building renovations, new technology and programs, and faculty hiring.

“I’d heard our university president speak and learned that we were only 35 percent state



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supported,” she said. “That surprised me. Our enrollment kept going up, and our faculty numbers were dwindling.”

Stead’s contribution led to a document outlining the case for funding the college, along with a draft plan and a suggested strategy, which she presented to then-Dean Jerry Strawser and campus administration. This needs assessment led to Charles T. “Ted” Bauer’s \$40 million endowment of the College of Business Administration in 2000. Now known as the C. T. Bauer College of Business, the school offers the range of resources and facilities that Stead outlined in her initial document.

“It’s been magnificent,” she said, describing the transformation of the college over the last decade.

Stead retired from teaching in 2001, but she remains a vocal supporter of Bauer College and UH. She has endowed three scholarships in the college honoring her aunt, paternal grandparents and parents — the result of a lesson she learned early in life about the importance of giving back. Eloise Milam, the director of the Melody Maids women’s chorus, helped Stead earn a scholarship that allowed her to pursue her undergraduate education.

“That’s where I learned how important scholarships are, so I’ve tried to repay that,” she said.

Retirement is hardly a quiet life for Stead, who has gone on to chair the task force for a \$27 million affordable housing project for The Women’s Home, a 52-year-old Houston nonprofit. In 2010, she married Carter Eugene (Gene) Carlton, Jr., MD, Distinguished Professor Emeritus, Department of Urology, Baylor College of Medicine. When they’re not volunteering their time for organizations in the Houston area, they travel and spend time fishing in Brazoria County.

“It’s the best five-and-a-half years of my life, and I’ve had a very happy life, so that’s saying something,” Stead said. “I have my fishing buddy, and it’s just been wonderful.”

As she reflects on her journey, Stead remembers a piece of advice from her dear Aunt Lucy that likely helped her push past adversity.

“All of our lives go up and down,” she said. “When I would hit a bump in the road, my aunt would say, ‘Tie another knot in the rope, and hold on.’”

CANTU CAN DO

Valley Businessman and Philanthropist Has Led
Growth in Developing Region

By Wendell Brock

“IT MAKES BUSINESS EASIER
WHEN YOU GET GOOD
TALENTED PEOPLE WORKING
WITH YOU, AND WE WORK
TOGETHER AS A TEAM.”



When Alonzo Cantu (BBA '78) enrolled at the University of Houston, he thought he wanted to be a pharmacist.

But after working in a drugstore one summer, he changed his mind.

At that time, "it was basically counting pills all day," he says. That didn't seem very stimulating, so he switched from the UH College of Pharmacy to what is now Bauer College. He figured he might get a job in a bank after college, but when a bank offered him a starting salary of \$800 a month, he knew he could do better.

Cantu is the son of migrant farm workers from Mexico who got out of the grape fields of California by starting a small construction company, building one house at a time.

Possessed of his parents' entrepreneurial spirit and the business skills he learned at UH, he decided to follow the path of his father, Guadalupe, and become a builder. This was 1978.

Today, with interests in banking, healthcare, title insurance and minor-league sports, the 60-year-old CEO and president of Cantu Construction & Development Company is involved with businesses that employ more than 5,000 people. As an executive, philanthropist, community organizer and political fund-raiser, he has been a driving force in the transformation of South Texas' Rio Grande Valley, the third fastest growing metropolitan region in the country.

Among just a few of his honors: The U.S. Department of Commerce has named Cantu Construction a National Minority Construction Firm of the Year. Texas Monthly has called Cantu one of the 25 Most Powerful Texans. In 2012, he was awarded the University of Houston's President's Medallion for his extraordinary support of the university; the next year, he was given the Distinguished Alumni Award.

Cantu credits his remarkable success in large measure to his parents, who believed in the value and integrity of hard work and thought their children would be better served by getting an education in the states. (He was born in McAllen but lived on and off in Mexico as a child. When his parents harvested crops in California, he picked alongside them.)

At UH, where he studied finance, Cantu says he gained an understanding of the essentials of business. He also learned the importance of social responsibility — of giving back to the community.

"You may be a great builder, a great carpenter, but if you don't know the business side, it's hard," he said in an interview, when asked to weigh the importance of his time at Bauer. "I think the university helped me a lot in finance and accounting and being able to figure out what I need to do to make my projects more successful."

As a businessman and entrepreneur, Cantu found his niche early on: providing services to the Valley's Latino community. As the Valley grew, he grew with it.

Today he is chairman of Lone Star National Bank, a Hispanic owned and operated financial institution. In 1999, he and a group of nine doctors started what would become Doctors Hospital at Renaissance, which he says is the largest physician-owned hospital in the United States. He is the owner of Valley Land Title Co., a real-estate title-insurance firm that he acquired to expedite real-estate closings. In the sports arena, he is majority owner of the Rio Grande Valley Vipers, an NBA development team, and owner of the Houston Toros, a soccer team affiliated with the Houston Dynamos.

But as he will be the first to tell you, the Valley wasn't built in a day, nor by one man alone. He needed help to succeed, and Bauer taught him the value of assembling a strong team.

"I believe in hiring people who are smarter than me," says the soft-spoken Cantu, who is as humble as he is driven. "Believe me, there are a whole lot of them that are smarter than me. I'm not intimidated by somebody smarter or having somebody help me," he continued. "It makes business easier when you get good talented people working with you, and I feel like I have been lucky, fortunate to have a lot of smart people with me. And we work together as a team."

As an employer, he looks for people of strong moral fiber. "I think honesty and loyalty are very important," Cantu says. "I think being punctual, being polite, treating people fairly, I think those are important qualities... I think you communicate with people and give them the opportunity to succeed and give them all

the tools that they need. If they don't want to do it, they just move on. I don't believe in working through intimidation or threats and bullying."

He rewards his people with training opportunities, compensation, bonuses and stock options. "But they've got to work hard," he said. "I used to start my meetings at 6 a.m.," he says. "Now we've slacked off and start at 7."

As a boss, he expects his employees to give back to the community. "We preach social responsibility, participating in volunteering for non-profits, serving on boards, raising money for charities."

One agenda that is near and dear to his heart is helping Valley youth have a better education. "We have a lot of young kids who go off to live somewhere else because there is no opportunity here."

To help remedy that issue, he was one of the founders of the Valley Alliance of Mentors for Opportunities and Scholarships (VAMOS), which awards scholarships to graduating high-school seniors from the region. Next year, VAMOS will celebrate its 20th anniversary. Cantu proudly points out that it has awarded \$20 million in scholarships so far. That includes a \$200,000 initiative with the University of Houston to help Valley kids go to UH.

Cantu, who is married to glass artist Yolanda Cantu and has two college-age daughters, is frequently in the headlines for his political fund-raising. "If you want to change things, I think going the political route is probably the best and fastest way."

He believes the best place to start is education. "It's good for the whole country, because the more educated workforce you have, the better quality of life you have, and the better jobs they can get. And the next generation, in my opinion, should be better than the last."

"If you enjoy what you do and you are passionate about it, it's not work," says Alonzo Cantu, the Bauer graduate, construction company executive and philanthropist who is credited with transforming the Rio Grande Valley.

LOSS AND TRIUMPH

From Aqua-Maid to Entrepreneur, Astronaut's Widow Proves Herself a Shrewd Business Executive and Generous College Benefactor

By Wendell Brock

Many years ago, Beth Williams left her North Carolina home for a life of adventure. And boy, did she find it.

She was a water-skiing Aqua-Maid at Florida's Cypress Gardens. She appeared in a TV film with aquatics legend Esther Williams. And in 1964, she married America's first "bachelor astronaut," Clifton Curtis Williams Jr. When the celebrity couple arrived, Houston was building the Astrodome, Lyndon B. Johnson was president, and America was awestruck by NASA's astronauts.

"He was a second lieutenant when I met him," Williams recalls of her husband, who everybody called C.C. "We had dated and dated and dated and, finally, we decided: 'OK, we'll marry.'"

Though her husband had been scheduled for a voyage to the moon, he never realized that mission. He died in a jet crash in 1967, leaving Williams pregnant with their second child.

But she was not to be defeated.

Again and again, Beth Williams has proven herself a figure of resiliency, courage, determination and hard work. She's a remarkably successful entrepreneur — and a generous benefactor to Bauer College.

Today, Williams — a plucky, petite, plain-spoken redhead — is the CEO of TechTrans International, a company she founded in 1993

to provide administrative support, and language and logistics services, to NASA. Williams, who worked in real estate while her two daughters were young, was persuaded to create TechTrans by co-founder Natalie Karakulko, an interpreter for the Apollo-Soyuz Test Program who was eager to start her own company.

From its humble beginnings, TechTrans has grown from five employees to more than 200. In addition to translation, interpretation and language-training services, the firm provides logistical support to businesses and government agencies the world over. It has offices in Russia, Jordan, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Colombia.

Williams — who was featured in Lily Koppel's 2013 nonfiction book, "The Astronaut Wives Club" — runs a tight, efficient organization with a hands-off management policy and minimal meetings. "I believe in lack of management," she says, only half-joking. "I think more managers confuse the issue."

Since the early 2000s, Williams has contributed to Bauer's Wolff Center for Entrepreneurship (WCE) — first as a speaker, later as a one-on-one mentor, most recently as a donor.

"It is a fantastic program, and I just truly believe in it," she says. In 2010, she established the TechTrans International Scholarship Endowment. She and her employees continue to give to the fund, which has more than doubled in

value, and in October 2015, she renamed it the Dave Cook Scholarship Endowment, in honor of the WCE's longtime director of mentoring.

From the minute she was invited to speak at a college brown-bag luncheon some years ago, she was wildly impressed by the entrepreneurship students. "Those kids were just amazing, and I thought: 'God, if I knew then what they are being taught now.'"

One student asked Williams if she would be her mentor — and later showed up at her office with a group of classmates. Williams was generous with her time and opened doors to her staff of technology experts and business managers. And at the personal level, the executive had much to share — on matters of bootstraps entrepreneurship and overcoming obstacles.

Just a few months after starting TechTrans, Karakulko, Williams's friend and business partner, was killed by a drunk driver. "It was devastating," Williams recalls. "The three people that were working there were all very close to her and had been with her for years. And then there was me. I was their unknown. But they stuck with me. They are still with me."

At the same time, Williams had to win the confidence of NASA, an organization that was close to her heart for obvious reasons. But NASA didn't cut her any slack. "I really had to prove myself up and down, because they knew I didn't have that technical background," she

says. "I think they were very nervous about it in the beginning, but as time has gone by, they really do realize we know what we are doing."


Koppel calls Williams a "trailblazer," "a good listener," and an advocate for others.

"Beth is an exceptional businesswoman and friend," the author says.

These days, Williams' quest for adventure seems to have subsided — just a bit. She doesn't load her shotguns to go duck hunting like she once did, but she still loves saltwater fishing. She recently built a new home on Galveston Bay and enjoys photographing the world around her — the birds, the sky. "I get up in the morning, and I take a picture of the sunrise because it's so gorgeous."

After 50 years in Houston, Williams can't get over the spirit and vitality of her adopted hometown. She believes Houston — with its space program and energy industry, its entrepreneurs, start-ups and innovators — is just the best place on earth to do business.

"I have never known people like this," she says. "You just can't get 'em down. There's just something about Houston and the people you meet. No BS — that's always my favorite thing."



As CEO of TechTrans International, Bauer College supporter Beth Williams empowers her team — "I think what you should do is train your employees and give them the job. And if they have a problem they come to you. And that is the way it kind of works in our office. We have a whole lot of people with opinions, and I love it."

Semester Events



INSPIRING MINDS

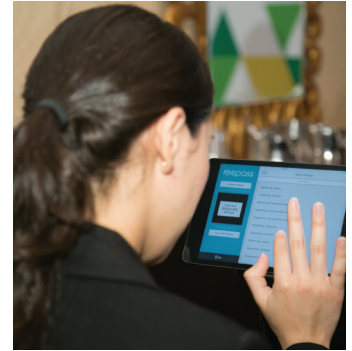
This fall, Potbelly Sandwich Works Chairman, CEO and President Aylwin Lewis ('76, MBA '90) spoke to Bauer students, alumni and the Houston community during the Inspiring Minds speaker series for a discussion on "Lessons in Leadership."



BAUER PRIDE DAY

Students, faculty and staff celebrated during Bauer Pride Day, where they played games, took photos and learned about the resources available to them at the college.

Semester Events



CAREER FAIR 2015

Bauer students met with more than 100 employers during the Rockwell Career Center Fall Career Fair.



COUGAR FOOTBALL TAILGATES

Students and alumni came out in full force this season to cheer on the UH football team at TDECU Stadium.



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You can find full photo galleries at www.wherewasomehappens.com.

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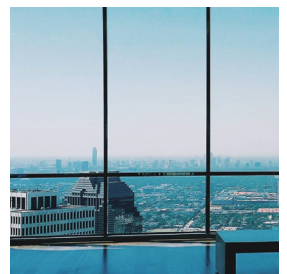
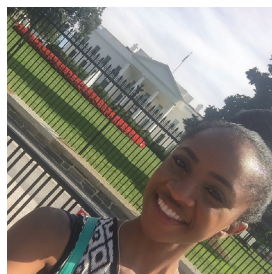
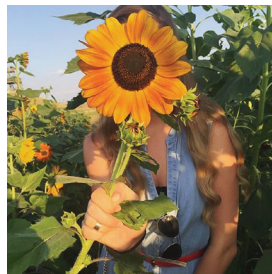
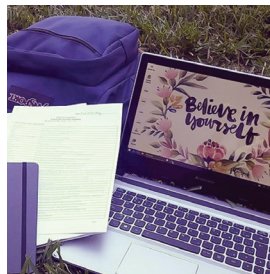
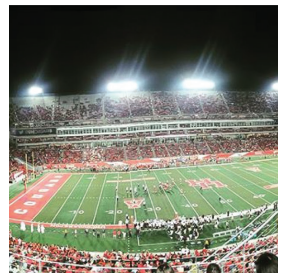
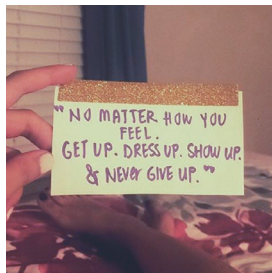
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