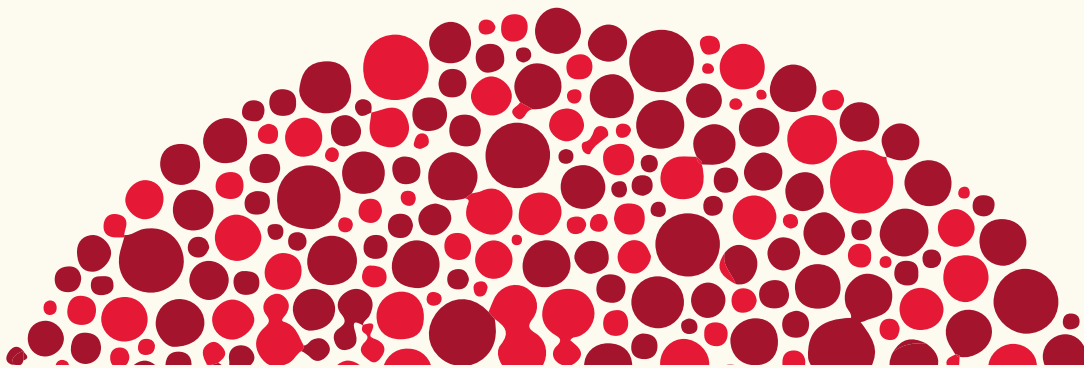


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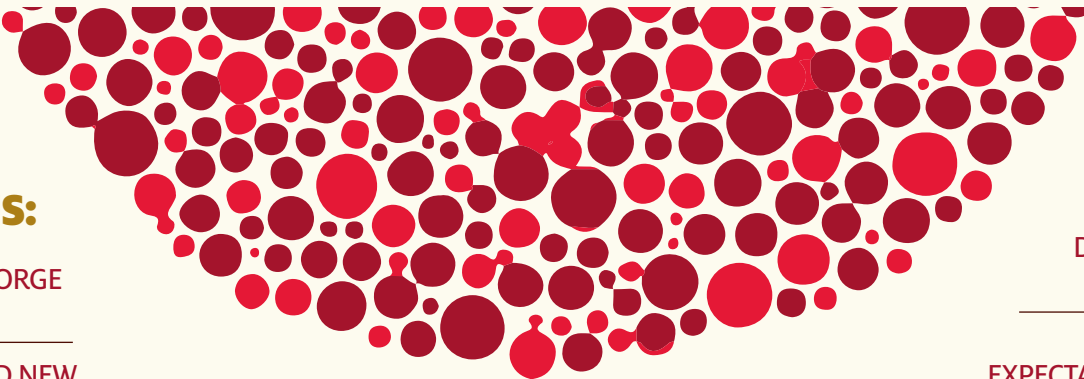
INSIDE *BAUER*

Spring/Summer 2016 • Volume 3, Issue 2



F A C U L T Y

FOCUS



PLUS:

BY GEORGE
PG. 14

BRAND NEW
PG. 34

DATA
DRIVEN
PG. 72

GRAIN
EXPECTATIONS
PG. 52

What's
Inside?

FEATURES



BY GEORGE

PROFESSOR WHO BUILT COUGAR FUND STEPS INTO NEW ROLE AS SENIOR ASSOCIATE DEAN FOR FACULTY AFFAIRS



BRAND NEW

BAUER HONORS STUDENT AIMS TO "START A REVOLUTION" AS SERIAL ENTREPRENEUR

PG. 40

FACULTY FOCUS

FACULTY FOCUS

BAUER PROFESSORS ARE LEADERS IN RESEARCH, SERVICE, TEACHING



ENJOY THE RIDE

BAUER COLLEGE BOARD CHAIR REFLECTS ON JOURNEY FROM STUDENT TO ALUMNUS AND NOW, SUPPORTER



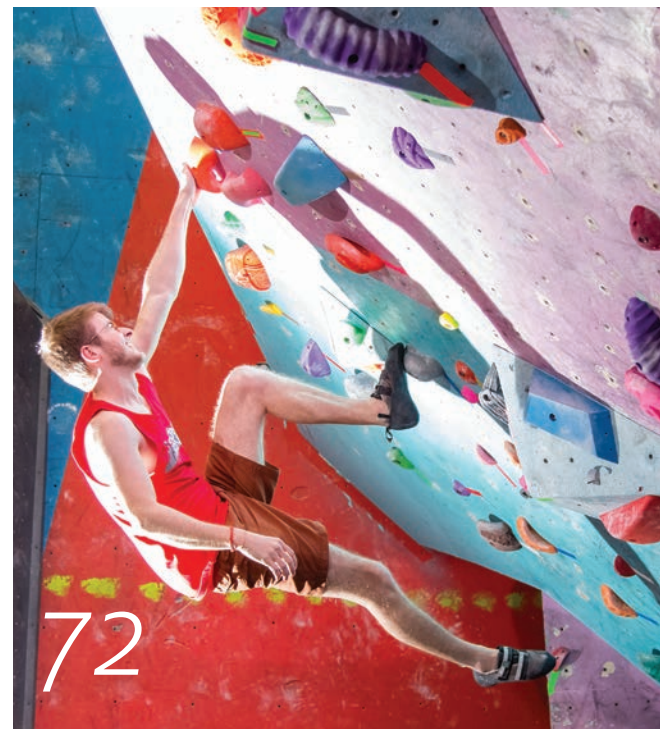
GRAIN EXPECTATIONS

ENTREPRENEURSHIP ALUMNA VENTURES INTO GERMINATED FOOD BUSINESS



SOCIAL SAVVY

BAUER MBA ALUMNA MANAGES SOCIAL MEDIA FOR OTTERBOX



DATA DRIVEN

RECENT ALUMNUS APPLIES ANALYTICS TO TAKE COMPANIES FROM "SURVIVE TO THRIVE"

DEPARTMENTS

FACULTY

- 18** RISING STAR
- 20** CODING THE FUTURE
- 24** ENCOURAGING ODDS
- 26** UPS AND DOWNS

STUDENTS

- 28** HERE FOR THE STUDENTS
- 30** TURN BACK TIME
- 32** BAUER POWER

PROGRAMS

- 38** A SHARED VISION

COMMUNITY

- 56** BACK TO SCHOOL
- 58** STREAM OF SUCCESS
- 60** FLYING HIGH
- 62** SMART COOKIE
- 64** ENTERTAINMENT
ENTREPRENEUR
- 66** VALUE ADDED

GIVING

- 78** DEFINING SUCCESS
- 80** THE GIFT OF SALES

IN EVERY ISSUE

- 6** LETTER FROM THE DEAN
- 8** EDITOR'S LETTER
- 10** LATEST FACULTY RESEARCH
- 82** SEMESTER EVENTS
- 90** ADVISORY BOARDS

INSIDE BAUER

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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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GREETINGS

April showers have indeed led to May flowers. Every spring brings a rainbow of blooms as we celebrate graduation and applaud our students who bloom into graduates and transform into successful alumni. And, what do our blooms tell us?

“Attending Bauer was probably one of the best decisions I made. At Bauer I was educated by the most awesome professors who challenged me to be the best.”

“In looking back, all that I am is because of the environment and education I received here at Bauer.”

We live in a world where the half-life of knowledge is less than five years. That we are able to stay ahead of the curve and be a hub for learning is possible thanks to the commitment of a dedicated faculty who are continually pushing the frontiers of knowledge. Our faculty are intentional in their research, asking questions whose answers can further conventional thinking and best practice.

Our research doubles in impact when it is shared, learned and lived. The good teacher, they say, inspires and nudges students so they want to learn more, understand deeper and gain better insight.

The good teacher prepares the student to face those curveballs that life throws at us.

The good teacher makes the student want to learn how to learn.

At Bauer College we are fortunate to have faculty who strive to be “the good teacher.” It is no wonder that this year our faculty won five University of Houston Teaching Excellence Awards. Aristotle believed that teachers are as important as parents — parents give their children life, and teachers give them the art of living. I cannot imagine a better description of the faculty of Bauer College.

In this issue of our magazine, we truly take you “Inside Bauer” and into the mosaic of learning that our faculty create through their scholarship, which often receives

no immediate reward, yet continues for the pure joy of learning.

You’ll read about Chet Miller’s expertise in negotiations that is shared with students via the “human game” and Tony Kong’s research on enhancing organizational growth by creating mindsets with passion.

You will learn to appreciate the importance of building relationships to grow sales, as told by Randy Webb, and the importance of coding skills in business as shared by Randy Cooper, Mike Parks and Hesam Panahi.

Read about earnings guidance dispensed through a can of Diet Coke by Kathleen Harris and about Staci Smith’s zeal for helping students appreciate statistics as a lifeline, not just a course requirement.

Learn more about Tom George’s work that is about growing rates of return via optimal asset allocations, both in the Cougar Investment Fund and in Bauer College faculty.

And, discover new developments in research underway by Bauer faculty, ranging from consumption of luxury brands to monitoring consumer behavior in healthcare, from sleep deprivation for leaders to dealing with the Zika virus via supply chain techniques, from the effect of misclassifying core expenses to negotiating online, from forecasting interest rates to the impact of activism on hedge funds.

Between the success stories of our students, the journey of discovery by our faculty, and the passion of our alumni and supporters there is never a dull moment at Bauer College.

As always, I invite you to be part of our story and share your insight, your comments and your feedback.

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,

I bet you've had a teacher in your life who you'll never forget.

Maybe it was in elementary school, as you were learning to add and subtract, or perhaps it was during your high school years, when you were struggling to fit in. I'm sure you had a teacher in college who challenged you to reach (or even exceed) the goals you set for yourself.

I'm fortunate to say that I've had all those teachers and more. Alongside my family and friends, I can count many teachers as the biggest inspirations in my life. They've shaped my understanding of the world and stoked a lifelong love of learning.

And, they've inspired me to teach others. Whether it's a colleague or my son, I hope to have the same kind of impact on others as many wonderful teachers have had on me.

I'm so excited to share with you this issue of *Inside Bauer*, which focuses on Bauer College faculty. Our team has had the opportunity to connect with so many members of the faculty over the last few months for interviews and photo and video shoots. The individuals who make up the Bauer faculty are as diverse as the city of Houston, but each story has a similar idea — teachers matter.

You'll read stories in this issue about faculty who are leaders in teaching, research and service. What's

more is that you'll hear firsthand from students whose lives have been transformed by these faculty members, both professionally and personally.

If you want to share your own story of how a Bauer faculty member has inspired or motivated you, please email insidebauer@bauer.uh.edu or post on social media, using #InsideBauer.

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](mailto:insidebauer@bauer.uh.edu) TO SHARE YOUR STORY, AND YOU MAY BE FEATURED IN AN UPCOMING ISSUE.





BENEVOLENCE CAN BOOST BUYING AT LUXURY COUNTER

FACULTY: Dr. Vanessa Patrick-Ralhan, marketing professor

PUBLICATION: *Journal of Retailing*

INSIGHTS:

Consumers are more likely to purchase high-end, luxury brands if a portion of the proceeds go to charity. Patrick's research challenges the convention among luxury retailers that co-branding with charity at the point-of-sale dilutes the brand image. Instead, this study suggests that the tie-in with charity does not increase guilt for buying a luxury good but in fact decreases it and helps consumers justify the purchase to themselves.



MONITORING CONSUMER BEHAVIOR CONCERNS IN HEALTH CARE

FACULTY: Partha Krishnamurthy, marketing professor and director of the Institute for Health Care Marketing

PUBLICATION: *Pain Physician*

INSIGHTS:

In recent years, health care professionals have seen a substantial increase in prescription opioids for managing chronic pain, along with a rise in opioid-related deaths in the United States. Using a consumer behavior lens, Krishnamurthy analyzes the influence of administered urine drug screenings on pain patients, assessing the impact of the doctor-patient relationship, including the frequency of appointment no-shows and dropouts to a physician after each screen.



LEADERS NEED SLEEP, TOO (AND MAYBE EVEN MORE OF IT)

FACULTY: Dejun Tony Kong, management assistant professor

PUBLICATION:
Journal of Applied Psychology

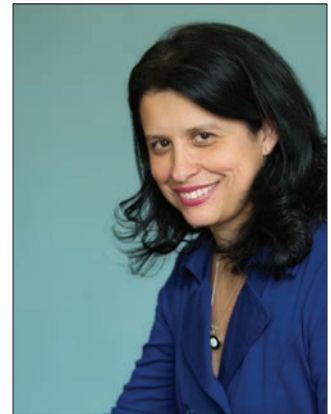
INSIGHTS:

Leaders are born, or so they say. But, according to Kong and colleagues' recent research, leaders' charisma has much more to do with how much they are sleeping, regardless of their inherent quality. Kong and colleagues' findings show that leaders who had less than the typically recommended seven hours had difficulty regulating emotions and projecting charisma. Based on their findings, Kong and colleagues also recommend that followers need normal sleep patterns – sleep deprivation can reduce their experience of positive emotion and thus negatively affect their perceptions of leaders' charisma.

EXAMINING THE ZIKA VIRUS THROUGH SUPPLY CHAIN LENS

FACULTY: Elizabeth Anderson-Fletcher, supply chain management associate professor; Dusya Vera, management associate professor; JeAnna Abbott, Spec's Charitable Foundation Professor in Social Responsibility, Conrad N. Hilton College of Hotel and Restaurant Management

PUBLICATION:
UH Center for Public Policy White Paper Series



INSIGHTS:

To avoid the “massive failures in communication” seen during the 2014 Ebola outbreak, global leaders must examine the rising Zika virus crisis through a supply chain lens, analyzing how all entities in the Zika supply chain can enhance their mindfulness and work together as partners, according to this co-authored Bauer study.



HOW DO COMPANIES MISCLASSIFY CORE EXPENSES?

FACULTY: Yun Fan, accounting professor

PUBLICATION:
Contemporary Accounting Research

INSIGHTS:

Although previous research has concluded that managers misclassify core expenses as special items to inflate reported core earnings, no study before this had distinguished between core expense components. Looking at the cost of goods sold (COGS) and selling, general and administrative expenses (SGA) separately, Fan found that managers strategically misclassify these items to meet different profitability benchmarks such as gross margins and core earnings.

HOW STRANGERS NEGOTIATE ONLINE

FACULTY: Norm Johnson, management information systems associate professor;

Randy Cooper, management information systems professor

PUBLICATION:
Journal of Management Information Systems



INSIGHTS:

In many online price negotiations, the use of instant messaging is on the rise, and research has shown that people who are strangers to each other tend to act more competitively in this environment. Johnson and Cooper's study analyzes how individuals using instant messaging for negotiations can encourage others to make "ending concessions" and increase personal gains to reach an agreement. This research provides insight and guidance for businesses to consider the use of instant messaging in future negotiations.



FORECASTING INTEREST RATES

FACULTY: Hitesh Doshi, finance assistant professor; Kris Jacobs, finance professor; Rui Liu, finance Ph.D. student

PRESENTATION: 5th Conference on Fixed Income Markets hosted by the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco

INSIGHTS:

Interest rate forecasts are typically obtained using a one-size-fits-all strategy, in which the model used for forecasting is estimated based on its ability to capture historical interest rates. Doshi, Jacobs, and Liu argue that estimation instead needs to explicitly take into account that the model will be used for forecasting. Different forecasting exercises also may require different model estimates. For instance, different model estimates can be used for short-horizon and long-horizon forecasts. Doshi, Jacobs, and Liu show that this strategy substantially improves forecasting performance.



THE IMPACTS OF ACTIVISM ON HEDGE FUNDS

FACULTY: Praveen Kumar, department chair and finance professor

PUBLICATION: *Journal of Financial Economics*

INSIGHTS:

In order to shake things up at a company, hedge fund activists target firms that seem mismanaged or have excessive costs. In this study, Kumar examines the product market spillover effects of hedge fund activism (HFA) on industry rivals of target firms. With HFA having negative effects on the average firms, Kumar found that rivals who are financially constrained accommodate these improvements, but those who face a high intervention threat respond effectively.

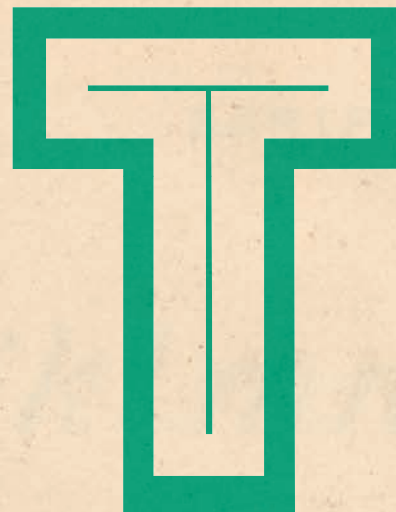
FACULTY
FEATURE

By GEORGE

**PROFESSOR WHO
BUILT COUGAR
FUND STEPS INTO
NEW ROLE AS
SENIOR ASSOCIATE
DEAN FOR FACULTY
AFFAIRS**

STORY BY WENDELL BROCK • PHOTOS BY NICKI EVANS





Tom George arrived at Bauer College during a time of sweeping change.

Houston businessman Charles T. “Ted” Bauer had recently given the college a landmark \$40 million gift. Arthur Warga, the late dean of the college, envisioned a student-managed investment fund that would help put the college on the national map, and he wanted a finance professor with George’s credentials to build the program. This was 2002.

Today, the Cougar Investment Fund — which teaches MBA and MS Finance candidates valuation and portfolio management skills — is valued at \$9 million and is one of only four (of about 6,000) such funds in the nation to manage private money rather than university endowment funds.

As an architect of the prestigious Cougar Fund brand and the Graduate Certificate in Financial Services Management that goes along with it, Thomas J. George is a college pillar and one of the more recognized scholars to occupy Melcher Hall.

That said, the shy, unassuming Michigan native would likely be the last person on campus to enumerate his accomplishments as a Bauer teacher, researcher and administrator. (When approached about an interview

for this article, the C. T. Bauer Professor of Finance and winner of the 2012 Melcher Award for Excellence in Teaching responded by saying that any number of his colleagues were more worthy. Once persuaded to have a conversation, he spent a good chunk of the time praising his peers for their stellar research and passion for teaching. “There are few people in the world who do what these people do at such a high level,” he enthused.)

It’s no wonder, then, that Dean Latha Ramchand recently asked the director of the AIM Center for Investment Management to serve the college in yet another capacity. Last year, the 52-year-old professor was named senior associate dean for faculty affairs, a job that makes him the college “go-to guy” for all things related to faculty.

“Bauer is a wonderful place, and I really have a lot of appreciation for the way my own career was able to develop here,” George says of his new role, “so if I can take a turn at doing this, and it helps other people, I am all for it.”

Before Bauer, George earned his Ph.D. in finance at the University of Michigan and taught at the University of Iowa, Northwestern University and Ohio State University. His years in the classroom have made him sympathetic to faculty concerns.

Apparently, he just gets it.

As senior associate dean, his duties include supporting departments in recruiting and facilitating new faculty hires (nine last year), promotion and tenure issues, managing faculty evaluations, handling accreditation matters and helping manage the Ph.D. program.

These days, he spends the bulk of his time on administrative matters, so he relishes his teaching time, calling the Cougar Fund course the “high point” of his week. The stock market has been rocky lately, but George says that makes his students work smarter. “It means they pay a lot more attention and invest a lot more effort.”

At the same time, George — a father of four who likes to stay in shape by running and enjoys puttering around the garden of his Kingwood home — says his focus on faculty has given him new perspective on the quality of teaching within the college.

The winner of many teaching awards (at Iowa and Ohio State as well as Bauer), George now finds himself on the other side of the process, requesting recommendations for teaching awards from students and faculty.

“I look at the kind of impact our faculty has and the things that students say about them, and it’s inspiring.”

A consistent researcher over the years, George jokes that he’s gotten so busy he has to do research on weekends. (His latest paper, on how so-called “dark trading” actually improves competition in securities markets, was co-authored with former Bauer professor Alex Boulatov and published in *Review of Financial Studies*.) Even if the professor doesn’t have time to publish like he once did, he is wildly enthusiastic about the level of research coming out of Bauer College and gratified to be able to support it.

“The quality of research by our faculty, the rate at which they do it, and where it lands in terms of the hierarchy of publications in academia is really amazing,” George says. “What some of our faculty achieve is nearly a statistical impossibility.”

George studied accounting as an undergraduate and does research on investment strategies, so naturally his philosophy is wary of risk and bullish on planning. He considers it vital for the college to look for ways to grow its resources. He believes executive education is one such opportunity. Having worked on customized projects before, he’s seen the value this type of programming can have for an organization. (On the personal side, he finds the process of helping executives address their challenges invigorating, too.)

“Our success in research and instruction,” George says, “leaves us poised with a great deal of potential to do even more. Yet we are constrained by resources. Consequently, gifts from donors and building outreach programs in executive education are priorities now, as a way to help relax those constraints and enable us to invest new resources to realize our potential for making even greater contributions.”

“
**WHAT OUR FACULTY DOES
TO SERVE OUR STUDENTS
IS AS REMARKABLE AS
WHAT THEY DO IN
RESEARCH, AND THAT IS
VERY REMARKABLE. SO
TO HAVE THIS POSITION
FOR A LITTLE WHILE AND
TO WITNESS THE RANGE
OF THINGS THAT WE ARE
ABLE TO ACHIEVE IS JUST
QUITE AMAZING.**
”

MENTORING
HOUSTON-AREA
YOUNGSTERS
FROM THE SUGAR
LAND CHAPTER OF
JACK AND JILL OF
AMERICA



In his administrative role, Tom George serves as the “go-to guy” for all things related to faculty at Bauer College. He also serves as a member of the faculty himself, pursuing research activity and teaching the graduate-level course for the Cougar Fund.



ON THE FRONT BURNER

In his new role, Senior Associate Dean Tom George is helping plan for the college’s future. Here are two initiatives he believes will make a difference to Bauer students and the business community:

BUSINESS ANALYTICS

“Business is hungry for talented professionals in this area, and the need will only grow over time. I expect at a minimum, over the next year, we will develop at least one business analytics certificate at the undergraduate level and an MS degree at the graduate level.”

THE WORKING FAMILIES INITIATIVE

“This is currently in the research stage, attempting to quantify the ways and extent to which professional and family life complement each other. I expect a later stage will involve outreach and possibly curriculum development centered on these research findings, with an aim toward helping our students be more effective and fulfilled in their professional and family lives.”

RISING STAR

Management Assistant Professor Couples Global Mindset with Passion for Business Psychology

By Wendell Brock

Dejun Tony Kong is a person of seemingly limitless curiosity and energy who has followed his passions with intellectual rigor — first as a kid in his native Shanghai, where he sang in a top children’s chorus and dreamed of a career as a professional singer; later as an intern at *Fortune* magazine in New York, where he became fascinated with business research and made a life-changing decision to join academia; and now as a Bauer College assistant professor of management, where he is an ardent researcher and teacher.

At 31, Kong seems to have packed several lifetimes of experiences into his journey so far.

He arrived at Bauer in 2015, after earning his Ph.D. in business administration at Washington University in St. Louis and teaching for three years at the University of Richmond in Virginia. Along the way, he has published more than 20 articles in various management and psychology journals, and many book chapters. His book — *Leading through Conflict: Into the Fray*, co-edited with Donelson R. Forsyth, a professor of leadership studies at the University of Richmond — was published in January by Palgrave Macmillan and has garnered praise from scholars around the globe.

And yet he remains humble, even surprised by his accomplishments.

“Honestly, I never thought about being a professor, and my parents actually joke that I don’t even look like a professor,” Kong says.



MY HOPE IS TO
REVOLUTIONIZE
HOW MANAGERS
THINK ABOUT
MANAGING
PEOPLE.



His research centers on trust and trustworthiness in social interactions and across cultures; the role of positive psychological factors such as humor, passion, mindfulness, emotional intelligence, charisma, and strengths; and workplace diversity.

While the new-to-Houston professor is eager to talk about his work, he finds it meaningful to trace how his interests evolved over time.

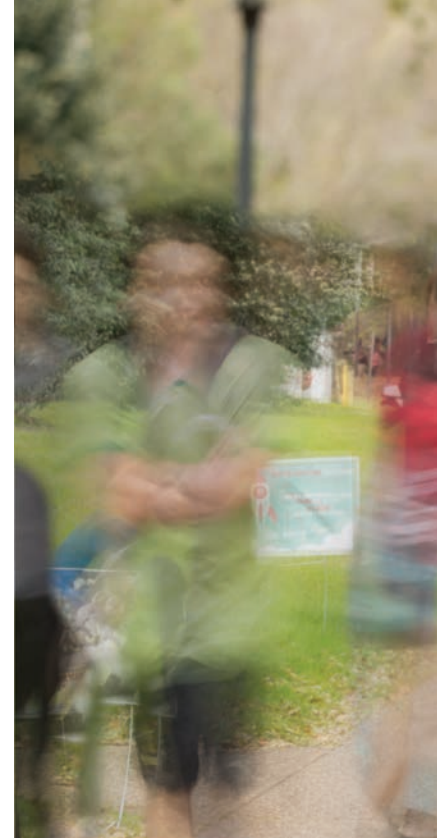
As a boy, he sang with a children’s chorus and later as an international soloist. He was on TV and made studio recordings. Besides his passion for performing, he was also interested in business, having grown up in the financially dynamic city of Shanghai.

During his senior year at Shanghai’s Fudan University (a “Chinese Ivy League”), he landed an internship at *Fortune*, where he fell in love with research.

He says: “It was really eye-opening and changed the way that I think about business, the U.S. and the world.”

While his management science studies at Fudan had been math heavy, his international experiences made him curious about how people from different cultures interact with one another. Realizing his true interests lay in business psychology, he decided to pursue a Ph.D. in organizational behavior in the states.

“What really fascinates me,” he says, “is why people think so differently or behave so differently and how we can help them cooperate with one another.”





LATEST RESEARCH

Assistant Professor Tony Kong has written numerous articles on trust and trustworthiness factors and positive organizational behavior. Here's a look at two of his latest:

“Strategic Consequences of Emotional Misrepresentation in Negotiation: The Blowback Effect”

Co-authored with Rachel L. Campagna, Alexandra A. Mislin and William P. Bottom. Published in *Journal of Applied Psychology*. The paper suggests that faking anger in principal-agent (employer-employee) negotiations can damage trust and incur long-term financial costs to employers. “Even though faking anger may sometimes bring short-term benefits,” Kong says, “it will hurt your long-term benefits because few people will want to work with or for you anymore.”

“Exploring the signaling function of idiosyncratic deals and their interaction”

With Violet T. Ho. Published in *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*. “What we try to say is that controlling employee behavior — for example, using the same incentives for employees of the same ranks — is not as effective as considering employees’ needs, interests and skills in job design, coupled with customized compensation schemes based on employees’ personal needs and unique contributions,” Kong says. “Such practice encourages employers to treat employees as individuals with different needs, interests and skills and make them feel competent.” This fosters higher morale and organizational success, he adds.

As Kong immersed himself in his Ph.D. studies at Washington University, the man who once planned to be an investment banker or a consultant at college knew for certain he wanted to be a professor.

“Academia has changed my life and given me a chance to express my opinions and change people’s lives. It is fun, exciting and meaningful,” he says, “and I love every day that I have new research discoveries and share my findings with students in classes.”

Today at Bauer, Kong teaches negotiations and organizational behavior. He values humility, diligence, resilience and open-mindedness.

“I believe that learning in business school can be fun,” Kong says.

No doubt his students find his youthful energy, accessible style and love of culture refreshing. Here’s a professor who can talk about Adele or the latest Broadway show at the Hobby Center — and explain his research in easy-to-follow language.

“People negotiate with one another every day, whether they know it or not,” he says. “But oftentimes many of us think of a negotiation as a competition. What I want to tell my students — hopefully they get the message after a whole semester’s course — is that a negotiation is actually a dialogue. It’s a conversation, not a competition. Once you get to the level of fierce competition, you’ve lost the negotiation.”



ASSISTANT PROFESSOR DEJUN TONY KONG SEES HIS RESEARCH AS ESSENTIAL FOR A MODERN WORKFORCE — “PEOPLE ARE CHANGING, SOCIETY IS CHANGING, FAMILY STRUCTURE IS CHANGING. THERE ARE A LOT OF DEMANDS THAT AN INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYEE IS MANAGING IN THE WORKPLACE. IN ORDER TO BETTER MOTIVATE EMPLOYEES IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORKPLACE, WE HAVE TO CONTINUOUSLY IMPROVE OUR MANAGEMENT METHODS.”

CODING THE FUTURE

Bauer Faculty Inspire Students by Connecting Business with Technology

By Jessica Navarro @ Amanda Sebesta

A GOOD TEACHER CAN SIMPLIFY A COMPLEX SUBJECT AND MAKE IT UNDERSTANDABLE. A GREAT TEACHER GOES EVEN FURTHER AND EXCITES STUDENTS ABOUT THAT SUBJECT MATTER.

THREE BAUER COLLEGE FACULTY MEMBERS ARE TAKING THE TOPIC OF CODING AND HELPING CLASSROOMS OF STUDENTS UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANT CONNECTION BETWEEN BUSINESS AND TECHNOLOGY.

RANDOLPH COOPER • Professor



Randolph Cooper's career path to become a professor was anything but a straight trajectory.

The self-proclaimed "older-than-dirt" professor began teaching in 1980, after working a range of other jobs, including school bus driver, supermarket janitor and electronics technician.

"I had been interested in teaching on and off since high school," he said. "I ultimately chose to teach at the university level because I felt that most of the students want to be there and would therefore be more motivated to learn."

As a student himself, Cooper discovered coding during his last semester as an undergraduate at UCLA, where he was majoring in economics but also taking courses

about jazz, art history and programming as he searched for his passion.

"In the programming course, I realized that I had finally found something in which I was interested," Cooper said.

From there, he pursued an MBA at UCLA, while working with Motel 6, Inc., as a programmer. He then earned a Ph.D. in management information systems at UCLA's Graduate School of Management.

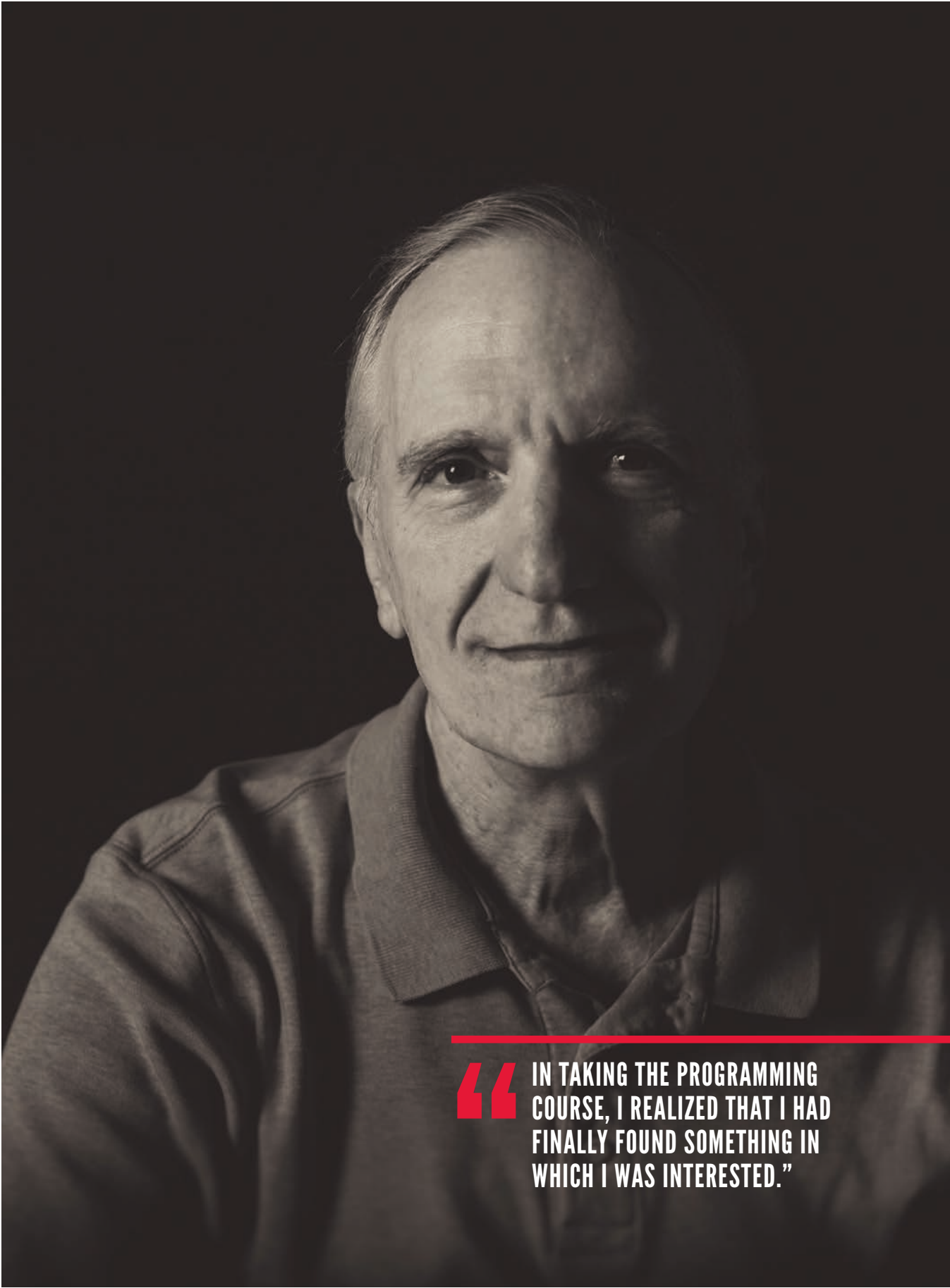
Now, as a Bauer faculty member teaching undergraduate, graduate and doctoral courses, Cooper says he aims to keep coding simple.

"I try to use a lot of intuitive examples and analogies," he added. "For example, in class

we learn about inheritance in terms of dysfunctional families and through building houses with multiple floors, while we learn about file layouts in terms of rolls of Life Savers candy."

Students say that Cooper's analogies work to make the sometimes dense material comprehensible and even worthy of a potential career.

"Before entering the first day of Dr. Cooper's course, I had all these queasy feelings in my mind whether if I will be able to pass or not, since it's such a hard class," management information systems senior Shruti Desai said. "His teaching style and technique have impacted my life so much that it has influenced me to seek coding jobs and internships."



“ IN TAKING THE PROGRAMMING COURSE, I REALIZED THAT I HAD FINALLY FOUND SOMETHING IN WHICH I WAS INTERESTED.”



MICHAEL PARKS • Associate Professor

Coding is not a new concept. Just ask Michael Parks, who has been immersed in the subject for 50 years.

And he's been teaching nearly as long — in his 48-year career, he's taught more than 15,000 students, including his now-colleague at Bauer College, Hesam Panahi.

Early on, after earning his MBA at Auburn University, Parks realized he wanted to be a professor as he was pursuing a job in industry.

"I was interviewing at a consulting firm in New York City, and the interviewer asked me what my job options were," he said. "I told him the various firms and jobs I was considering and that I was also contemplating getting a Ph.D. When I finished, he said: 'Go get your Ph.D.; don't take my job.'"

He added: "Apparently in my answers I showed much more enthusiasm about being a professor than I did in taking any of the jobs I spoke about — including his. He was right."

Parks earned his Ph.D. from the University of Georgia in applied mathematics. There, fate stepped in to kick off what has become a lifetime of teaching.

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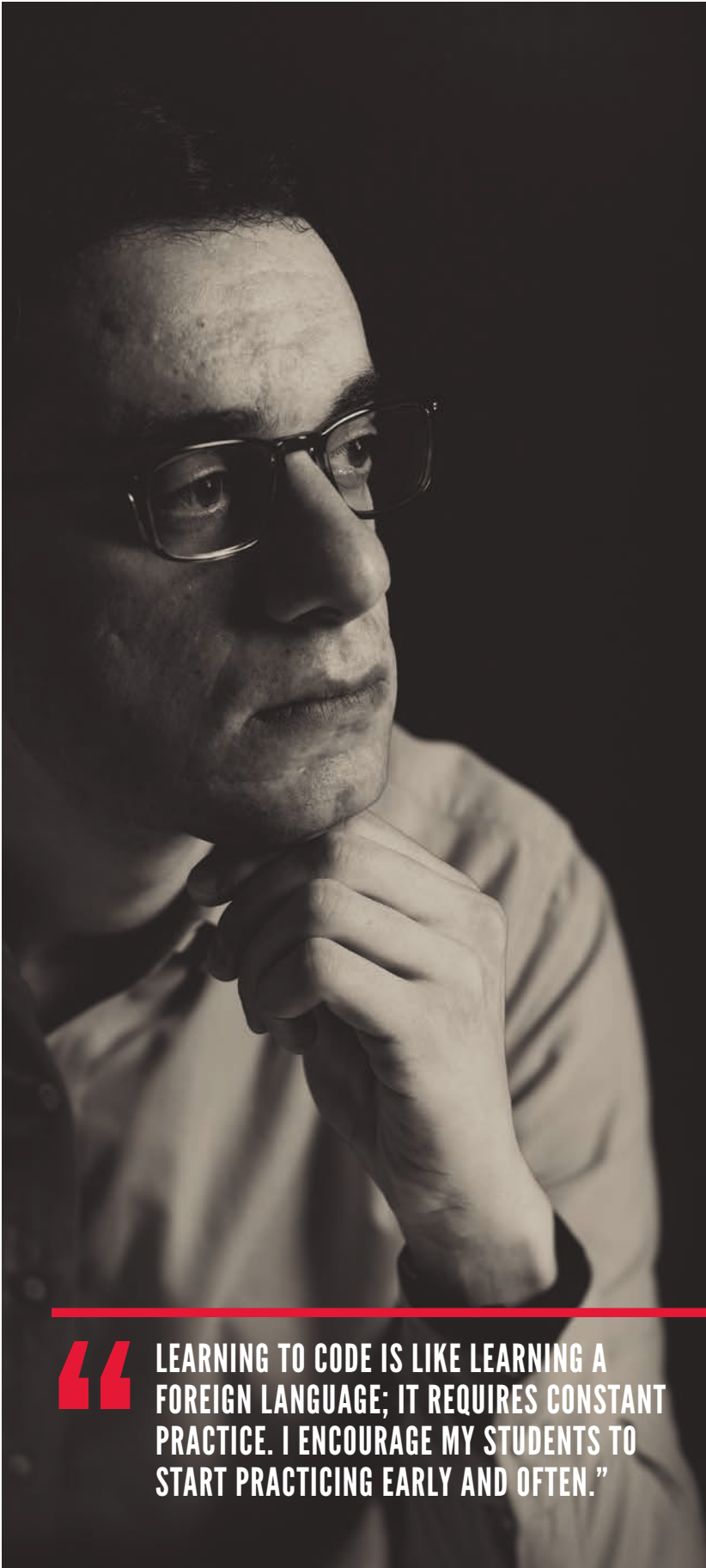
**DR. (MICHAEL) PARKS
GENUINELY CARES
ABOUT HIS STUDENTS.
HE ATTENDS EVERY
MISSO MEETING,
AND WANTS US TO BE
SOLVING BUSINESS
PROBLEMS OUT IN
THE FIELD.**

”

"When I was taking my second computer class, I was asked to finish teaching the class for the instructor, who had a family tragedy and was unable to continue teaching," he said. "I was picked because I had made a perfect score on the midterm exam, and they couldn't find anyone else who would be willing to take over the course in midstream. I took the job, did well and was asked to continue the following quarter. I have been teaching ever since."

MIS students at Bauer appreciate Parks' involvement and investment in their success. As faculty advisor for the college's Management Information Systems Student Organization (MISSO), he's a regular fixture at meetings and events outside the classroom.

"Parks genuinely cares about his students. He attends every MISSO meeting, and wants us to be solving business problems out in the field," MIS junior David Comer said. "He doesn't change the perception of coding being difficult, but after taking his classes, I've gotten better at seeing computer programming as a tool belt."



HESAM PANAHI

Clinical Assistant Professor

When Hesam Panahi was 8, his parents bought him his first computer.

“I started to tinker early on,” he said. “I was really interested in the Internet and its potential, so I learned how to develop websites.”

Panahi built his first website in 1995, when his mother’s company needed a presence online, and he volunteered to do the job.

“I’ve been hooked ever since,” he said. “Learning to code is like learning a foreign language; it requires constant practice. I encourage my students to start practicing early and often.”

He learned basic programming with the Linux operating system and briefly considered a more technical career before pursuing teaching.

“Before I started college, I wanted to do something with design and computers — no one called it user experience back then, but that’s probably the area I would have pursued,” Panahi said. “After I finished graduate school, I didn’t want to join academia. Instead, I decided to start a software development company, where we worked with clients to develop custom web applications.”

But academia found Panahi via Michael Parks, one of his faculty advisors in Bauer College’s doctoral program. When he earned his Ph.D., Parks offered Panahi a position and in 2011, he began teaching MIS and coding classes at Bauer. His teaching lineup now also includes several tech entrepreneurship courses, as well as leading RED Labs, the university’s startup accelerator.

Students describe Panahi’s teaching style as engaging. Ryan Briggs (BBA ’15) recalls how Panahi required students to apply what they were learning through lectures to better understand concepts.

“He made Java and other coding languages more understandable,” Briggs said. “He would ask a daily question in class based on information from the previous lecture or reading, and it required us to think through the materials that he covered.”

““ LEARNING TO CODE IS LIKE LEARNING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE; IT REQUIRES CONSTANT PRACTICE. I ENCOURAGE MY STUDENTS TO START PRACTICING EARLY AND OFTEN.”



“

SHE MOTIVATES STUDENTS
TO DO BETTER EVERY DAY.

”

KARLA SANCHEZ,
SUPPLY CHAIN
MANAGEMENT
JUNIOR

ENCOURAGING ODDS

Statistics Instructor Inspires, Motivates Students to “Just Enjoy Learning”

By Priscilla Aceves @ Jessica Navarro

Lesson One — statistics shouldn't be scary.

That's what Clinical Assistant Professor Staci Smith tells students in her undergraduate Introduction to Statistics course each semester. The class is required for business students at the University of Houston, but Smith says the sometimes feared subject matter actually gives Bauer graduates the upper hand in the corporate world.

“Statistics is in every aspect of business,” she said. “You are taking data and analyzing it in order to come up with a decision. I love being able to share with students that this isn't just another math class.”

Smith, who earned her undergraduate degree in business statistics and worked as a tutor during her college career, pursued a Ph.D. in statistics from UH. Now, each semester, she brings her excitement for the subject to hundreds of students, who she acknowledges might approach the course from a biased perspective initially.

“I challenge students to make the decision for themselves about whether STAT is difficult or scary,” Smith said. “Never just go off what other people have told you. This class is going to require you to put in a lot of work, but if you do put in that work, you're going to see results.”

Succeeding in the course, and ultimately in the professional world, involves perseverance and dedication, she added.

“I advise students to work as many problems as possible, whether from the textbook or what is provided in the homework,” Smith said. “You do what you have to do to learn the

material, and tell yourself that you can do it. I think that's what's missing. People should be saying, “Yes, STAT's is a lot of work, but you can do it.”

Smith also serves as administrator of the STAT Tutoring Lab, a part of Bauer Tutoring Services. She hires and trains student tutors that provide extra help to hundreds of STAT students daily.

“I want students to come see me, but there may be some that feel more comfortable talking to a fellow student, someone who's been there,” she said. “To be able to have a classmate to say, ‘I've been there, I've put in the work, I know what you're going through, and you can do this’— that's valuable.”

Smith is devoted to helping others, whether it's in the classroom with her students or in her spare time, where she is the volunteer coordinator for a local food pantry and interacts with low-income clients who receive food and clothing.

“I love helping people, especially people who are having a difficult time,” she said. “Understanding where they're coming from and being able to cultivate a relationship with them is part of what I do.”

Smith also sees the value of building relationships with her students and says she is always willing to offer advice, whether it is about career plans or challenges in other classes. And she understands the value of injecting humor and lighthearted moments into what can be a dense subject — she regularly surprises students during the semester by dressing up as a Minion, a popular character from the *Despicable Me* movie franchise.

“If there's anything, I want to bring forth to students, it is encouragement,” Smith added. “I think there can be way too much discouragement about this class. There's an intimidating façade surrounding statistics and statistics professors, but I'm here to say, drop what you think is the face of statistics, and just enjoy learning.”

STUDENTS WEIGH IN

“Although Statistics 3331 is hard, Dr. Smith does her best to try and explain the material to the students' understanding. She inspires students to enthusiastically pursue their personal and career goals no matter how difficult they may seem.”

NANCY ESPINOZA,
FINANCE JUNIOR

“Dr. Smith is very passionate about helping students, even if you are not in her class. She motivates students to do better every day.”

KARLA SANCHEZ,
SUPPLY CHAIN
MANAGEMENT JUNIOR

UPS AND DOWNS

Management Professor Helps Bauer MBA Students Learn the “Human Game”

By *Valentina Fontiveros*



ABOUT THE WRITER

VALENTINA FONTIVEROS IS A FULL-TIME BAUER MBA STUDENT STUDYING STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT. SHE EARNED A BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN GEOLOGICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES AND A MASTER'S DEGREE IN GEOPHYSICS FROM STANFORD UNIVERSITY. SHE WORKED IN A TECHNICAL ROLE IN THE OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY AND NOW BALANCES SCHOOL AND WORK DOING PART-TIME CONSULTING FOR A SOFTWARE COMPANY IN HOUSTON.

On the first day of his popular Effective Negotiating course, Professor Chet Miller told us: "Some days you are up; some days you are down. That's the way this class goes."

And, some may say that's the way life generally goes. Acquiring effective negotiating skills and understanding the nature of the "human game" is definitely a plus in skewing the outcomes of life choices and business decisions toward more favorable ones than prescribed by chance.

When I chose Bauer College for my MBA, I wanted to gain this advantage. As I was exploring elective options for the spring semester, I asked several students, alumni and faculty for recommendations — Miller's classes always made the top of the list.

A Bauer MBA alumna told me it was his class that has helped her most at her job, where she was recently promoted to manager. As one of my seasoned peers said, "If I could make it happen, I would choose Chet for all my business courses."

Praise for Miller is well deserved. He exudes confidence and enthusiasm, and his energetic teaching style engages his more than 40 students in our Monday night class.

He lives and breathes the stuff.

What makes his class outstanding, apart from his charismatic persona, is his innovative approach to organizing not only a lecture, but a truly dynamic environment that involves discussing concepts, class simulations and reflecting on the results all within the three-hour class meeting.

Learning how to be an effective negotiator takes practice, and the carefully orchestrated negotiations he plans for his students reinforce class concepts and often highlight areas for improvement in all involved. An extra dollop of motivation to come thoroughly prepared to class is the open discussion of the negotiated outcomes for all teams, where Miller points out who hit a homerun and who might have completely dropped the ball.

But it's not all cutthroat competition in class. Miller invites in some levity by coloring the attitudes and tactics of negotiators using references to the overly optimistic (and often

victimized) Pollyanna as well as the more effective TV detective Columbo. Most importantly, he is dedicated to improve the performance of each and every student under his wing.

The current class is comprised of a mixture of full-time and professional MBA candidates, along with a few students from the law school. He listens and considers all perspectives, yet while he is soft on the people, he will be tough on the problem of choosing the best possible outcome for the class. His dedication is unflinching; he painstakingly reviews each negotiation simulation and provides timely and personal feedback on the outcomes.

I must confess that persuasive bargaining is not one of my strong suits and dealing with the win-lose in-class negotiations has been challenging for my often idealistic personality. I wouldn't compare myself to Pollyanna, but I have found that I tend to avoid conflict and as a result, often settle for a less than optimal outcome.

This doesn't fair well, I have learned, in instances where based on the structure of the problem there are predetermined losers and winners, and where distributive issues over finite resources are at stake. Sometimes the "glad game" is not the "human game."

I'm definitely glad that I'm taking his class, and I sense that it will continue to be extremely valuable experience in both the short and long term. There is a higher probability now that when I reflect back on my career choices, I will be empowered to say something similar to Miller's comments at the end of each class: "It was a good run, with mostly good outcomes. Thanks for playing."

FACULTY FOCUS

PROFESSOR CHET MILLER IS A RESPECTED THOUGHT LEADER IN CHANGE MANAGEMENT, STRATEGIC VISIONING AND HIGH-COMMITMENT, HIGH-INVOLVEMENT APPROACHES TO MANAGING PEOPLE. HE HAS PUBLISHED IN SEVERAL PEER-REVIEWED ACADEMIC JOURNALS AND WORKED WITH A NUMBER OF MANAGERS AND EXECUTIVES THROUGH MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS FOR ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING ABB, BANK OF AMERICA, KRISPY KREME, LA FARGE, RED HAT, STATE FARM INSURANCE, TEXAS SPECIAL OLYMPICS AND THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE.





MS ACCOUNTANCY STUDENT MEGAN
ISELIN SAYS THAT CLINICAL ASSISTANT
PROFESSOR KATHLEEN HARRIS IS
MORE THAN JUST A TEACHER TO
HER STUDENTS — SHE'S A MENTOR
AND A FRIEND.



By Megan Iselin
(BBA '15)

HERE FOR THE STUDENTS

Accounting Professor Dispenses Wisdom,
Guidance over Diet Coke

Clinical Assistant Professor Kathleen Harris is one of the most incredible individuals that I have had the pleasure of meeting at Bauer College.

I first encountered her during my sophomore year as a student in her ACCT 3366 Financial Reporting Frameworks course. It was a Monday morning, and she whipped through the door holding her signature Diet Coke.

She was a woman on a mission to get things done — and she still is.

She challenges her students not only to memorize concepts, but to really understand and apply them to a diverse set of situations. The concepts are going to be the same, but we have to get ready for the real world, which may not look anything like our book problems. That's one thing that almost all of Dr. Harris' students will be able to agree on — she excels in connecting the coursework material to real world applications, and she tells it like it is.

Accounting made sense to me, so I aced my first few frameworks exams. My pride got the best of me, and I started to skip class later on in the semester.

That's when everything caught up to me.

I failed my very next frameworks exam. Not many people know that about me, since we don't openly share our failures with one another. In fact, failure usually drives people into such a state of denial that it hinders future successes.

"There's no way that I could have failed that exam."

"Why did this happen to me?"

I could have retaliated against Dr. Harris or made countless excuses for my own fault, but that would have been a waste of time and energy. I had to take accountability for myself and my actions. After all, isn't that what the CPA profession is about — being honest and keeping your integrity?

This instance was one of my greatest character building moments in college. I swallowed my pride, acknowledged my shortcomings and handled it. I immediately hit the books and put countless hours into studying for my final exam. I worked countless practice problems and visited Dr. Harris during her office hours.

There was no disappointment in her face, only a challenging stare daring me to be better than yesterday. I aced my final exam and went on to excel in all of my other accounting coursework (although Advanced Accounting was a bumpy ride).

I've been involved in Beta Alpha Psi, the honor society for accounting, finance and management information systems, for the majority of my time at Bauer. When the organization needed a new faculty advisor, Dr. Harris stepped up to fill that role. I had the privilege of being elected president and working with her during Beta Alpha Psi's period of reorganization and growth.

She is a wonderful mentor and even better human being. Her focus is centered on her students and their successes, and she constantly motivates me to continue creating new opportunities for my peers.

After a long week of visiting firms and meeting with the officer team, I would trudge into her office, dejected about a series of low attendance at Beta Alpha Psi events. She'd look at me over her glasses and smirk, "Megan, it's exam time. People need to study."

Now, as an MS Accountancy student at Bauer, I serve as Dr. Harris' teaching assistant, and I remind myself of her words whenever the accounting tutoring lab gets busy.

I once asked her why she got into teaching. From a successful corporate career to a clinical assistant professor?

Her response: "The business world has given me so much, and it's my turn to give back. I'm here for the students."



FACULTY FOCUS

Students like Megan Iselin say they value the industry expertise and experience that Kathleen Harris brings to the classroom.

Harris began her career as a financial analyst and also held positions as a controller before leading her own firm and providing consulting to corporations in regulatory compliance, audit and acquisition due diligence. In the early 2000s, she joined the Bauer College faculty after earning her MS and Ph.D. degrees from the school.

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**THERE WAS NO
DISAPPOINTMENT
IN HER FACE,
ONLY A
CHALLENGING
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YESTERDAY.**
”

TURN BACK TIME

Marketing Doctoral Student Wins Prestigious Marketing Science Institute Award

Intro by Jessica Navarro; Interview by Amanda Sebesta



DOCTORAL STUDENT MAHDI EBRAHIMI IS AMONG THE TOP PH.D. SCHOLARS IN THE MARKETING DISCIPLINE, RECENTLY EARNING THE MSI CLAYTON DISSERTATION PROPOSAL AWARD.

Students in Bauer College's doctoral program are doing more than poring over journal articles and grading assignments — they're collaborating with established faculty members and producing research that has impact.

Marketing Ph.D. candidate Mahdi Ebrahimi is interested in learning more about consumers' feelings of busyness and the scarcity of time. Now in his fourth year of the program, he has had the opportunity to work alongside Vanessa Patrick-Ralhan and Melanie Rudd, two faculty in the college's Department of Marketing & Entrepreneurship who themselves are noted experts in the discipline.

Ebrahimi has also worked on research that explores how consumers' perceptions of their work and non-work identities influence their perception of time scarcity, which has won the Marketing Science Institute (MSI) Clayton Dissertation Proposal Award, given annually by the organization to the best dissertation proposals on important marketing subjects.

We spoke with Ebrahimi to discuss his latest research and what's next after he earns his Ph.D. from Bauer.

Q: What is the focus of your current research?

A: I look into strategies that consumers can use to alleviate their feelings of time scarcity — feelings of busyness. In my first project, with Dr. Patrick and Dr. Rudd, we are examining the relationship between consumers' beliefs about feeling busy and volunteering. While consumers report "being busy" as the main reason for not volunteering, research has shown that busy people volunteer more than less busy people. We found that being busy per se (i.e. having a lot of things to do) is not a barrier to volunteering. Instead, it is the attitude towards busyness that influences volunteering. Particularly, we found that consumers who believe that feeling busy is a good thing (vs. feeling busy is a bad thing) feel greater control over their lives, and are more likely to volunteer their time.

In a second project, which won the MSI dissertation award, I am exploring how the structure of identities in consumers' minds affects feelings of time scarcity. Consumers structure their work and nonwork identities in two broad ways. Some people perceive their work and nonwork identities as integrated while other

people perceive them as segregated. They also manage the boundaries between their work and nonwork life differently. Some consumers integrate their work and nonwork life — they might call their spouse when they are at work or reply a work email when having dinner with their family. Others tend to keep work at work and home at home. We have found that time scarcity arises when there is a mismatch between how people organize their identities in their mind and in action. Consumers who perceive their work and nonwork identities as integrated (vs. segregated) would experience greater time affluence when they integrate (vs. segregate) their work and non-work activities.



**THE FACULTY IN BAUER'S
MARKETING PH.D. PROGRAM
ARE AMONG THE TOP
RESEARCHERS IN CONSUMER
BEHAVIOR AND ALWAYS
WILLING TO HELP STUDENTS
MOVE PROJECTS FORWARD.**



Q: Why are you interested in this area of research?

A: I think time is a unique resource. Everyone has an equal amount of it, yet their perceived time availability varies. This unique characteristic makes research on subjective time perception an interesting area which is also a burgeoning area in consumer behavior.

Q: How can your research impact business?

A: Non-profit organizations can use our findings to recruit busy consumers for volunteering activities more effectively. Businesses can also use the findings to create a greater sense of empowerment and encourage greater volunteering among their employees.

My second project offers insights to businesses that are considering redesigning their work policies. Our findings suggest that separating work and non-work activities is not an ideal strategy to manage demands of work and life for all employees. So, businesses should offer their employees more flexible working options so that employees could find their best working styles, which leads to greater performance and satisfaction.

Q: Tell me about the MSI award, what does that mean for your research?

A: The MSI Clayton Dissertation Proposal Competition is an annual competition held by the Marketing Science Institute that recognizes the best dissertation proposals on important marketing subjects. Being recognized by MSI means that my research is of interest and importance to MSI member companies that range from PepsiCo to Procter & Gamble.

Q: How has your time at Bauer helped you with your Ph.D.?

A: I've received quality training and mentorship from my advisor Dr. Patrick and my committee members. They are among top researchers in consumer behavior and are always willing to help Ph.D. students to move their projects forward. We also have an annual Ph.D. symposium and weekly seminars which keep us up to date on the latest research in marketing, as well as a chance to teach undergraduate courses, which is an invaluable opportunity to improve our teaching skills.

Q: What are your plans after you get your Ph.D.?

A: I plan to start my career as a faculty member at a research university. Although I love teaching, research is my first priority in my academic career, so I would like to join a Tier 1 research university in a department that nurtures young faculty and appreciates quality research.

BAUER POWER

Bauer MBA Students Represent U.S. as Semifinalists in International Business Competition

By Priscilla Aceves

Bauer MBA students Preeti Singh and Matt Avery know what it's like to balance a demanding schedule.

As full-time graduate students, they tackle coursework, growing careers and leadership roles in multiple student organizations on a weekly basis. But when they saw an opportunity last year to compete internationally with other business students while providing a solution for a nonprofit, they eagerly took on the challenge.

That's when Team "Bauer Power" was formed.

Singh and Avery ultimately became the sole American team in the semifinal round of the Capgemini Innovators Race Competition, where duos from across the globe combine technology, business and sustainability to present solutions for real companies, using digital video and social media to garner votes.

Intrigued by the digital nature of the competition, which required participants to present a three-part business solution in a one-minute video, Singh reached out to her classmate to see if he'd be willing to join her team. Despite his busy schedule, Avery was instantly on board.

"When Preeti contacted me last November, I had my own company that I was working on. I was a full-time student, I have a wife and a son, and I was part of multiple student organizations," Avery said. "I thought, 'I don't have time for this,' but that's when I realized that's why I needed to do it."

Singh and Avery viewed the competition as a way to stretch themselves personally and professionally. They immediately began researching their

assigned organization, the Boys & Girls Club of America, and spent long hours over finals week and winter break brainstorming ways to increase membership. By the time the first round began, their idea had been polished into a professional, one-minute video.

Team Bauer Power proposed a social media recruiting strategy using Snapchat and Periscope, along with a content plan to involve high-profile Boys & Girls Club of America alumni, including actress Jennifer Lopez and basketball player Kevin Durant.

"Matt and I have the same purpose," Singh said about their commitment to the cause. "He has a nonprofit background, and I'm also interested in nonprofits. The fact that you're using technology to help and do something good for society really motivated me."





“We really believed in the cause,” Avery added. “That’s what caused us to work harder.”

That hard work paid off when out of all participating U.S. teams, Team Bauer Power was the only American team to advance to semifinalist standing. Singh and Avery were then invited to San Francisco to visit the Capgemini Innovation Lab and meet top executives and film a series of videos that aired on the CNN website.

“The experience was really great,” Singh said. “We got to meet Larry Cohen, chief technology officer of Capgemini, and other directors. They taught us how to look at the problem at a high level.”

They also received guidance on enhancing their business proposal and general career advice from Capgemini External Communications and Public Relations Lead Glen Nelson.

“We were around so many high-level people that I felt like I went two years further in my career in those two days,” Avery said. “The advice and mentorship that I received was just tremendous.”

The experience mirrors their time as Bauer MBA students, where they have received guidance and encouragement by faculty and alumni that have helped enhance their career paths.

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**THINGS WON'T
ALWAYS GO YOUR
WAY, BUT STAY
FOCUSED AND KEEP
MOVING FORWARD.**

”

PREETI SINGH,
MBA STUDENT

“I actually counted 24 or 25 faculty members that helped me with résumé building, getting a referral or teaching me how to dress,” Avery said.

Singh also credits her participation in various graduate student organizations for providing her with invaluable experience.

“Through these clubs, I’ve been able to meet and interact with likeminded people, and I’ve understood how the industry works and what things are required for good professionals,” she added.

After graduating, she plans to give back to Bauer College by offering her own advice to future MBA students. Meanwhile, Avery plans to continue growing his company, Elisha Consulting, while also remaining involved with the college.

“Things won’t always go your way,” Singh said. “But stay focused and keep moving forward.”

Avery added: “I think that’s what Bauer is for students. It’s a way to stretch yourself beyond what you think you’re capable of.”

STUDENT
FEATURE



Bauer
Honors
Student Aims
to "Start a
Revolution"
as Serial
Entrepreneur



NEW

STORY BY
Jessica Navarro

PHOTOS BY
Nicki Evans

Bauer College sophomore Viviane Nguyen is building her personal brand as a content creator and trend-setter online, through a fashion blog and Instagram account.



VIVIANE NGUYEN

tries on potential careers like she tries on clothing for the photos she shares on her fashion blog and Instagram account.

She's studying business at Bauer College, and when she envisions her future, she can't imagine doing just one thing — and in her mind, she shouldn't have to.

"I want to start a revolution and make a huge impact," Nguyen said. "I want to change trends, change mindsets, change businesses. I want to bring my ideas to life."

Nguyen represents a new generation of business students — millennials and the so-called "Generation Z," eager to learn about marketing, leadership, branding, startups and collaboration so they can apply those skillsets to pursue their passions.

"We want to do something we're really passionate about," she said. "There is less emphasis on getting a good job and having your own life outside that. We want to go to work thinking, 'Wow, this is amazing.' I want to change the world."

For Nguyen, creating a strong personal brand is the first step to engaging others and making an impact. Through an online fashion blog and carefully curated social media accounts, she has already established herself as an expert in trends, style and content creation.

"Your social media presence is your brand identity," she said, adding that companies should be using platforms like Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and Snapchat to communicate their corporate culture to digitally sophisticated consumers.

She added: "It's every single aspect from the way you handle customer relations to the way your website looks — everything online matters. It's not enough to just be on social media; you have to use aesthetics, images and conversation to push your brand identity and show your core values as a company."

Nguyen is honing her business skills as a sophomore at Bauer, where she plans to double major in marketing and entrepreneurship. She is also part of the college's Bauer Business Honors Program.

"The classes that I'm taking are so applicable to real-life situations," she said. "You can create your own product, think of a new idea and bring it to market. You get to think of all the ins and outs — what will we say on social media? What will the brand image be? How should we position this?"

In addition to what she's learning in the classroom, Nguyen has fully immersed herself into the college experience, participating in numerous clubs and activities and living on campus.

"You have to push yourself outside your boundaries and really get to know people," she said. "Ask them about their passions. Because when you focus on yourself, just going to class every day and maybe talking to the couple of people sitting next to you, you can't reach people or get to know yourself either."

Naturally inquisitive, Nguyen strives to learn more about her classmates and professors, establishing relationships that have the potential to last long after graduation.

Those connections have made the transition to college life much easier, she added.

"Going into campus when I was applying as a 17-year-old was kind of overwhelming," Nguyen said. "I didn't know quite what I wanted to be, but when I came to Bauer, everything just fell into place. I developed a passion for marketing and entrepreneurship, and I really found out where I wanted to go in life. It's been a great decision."

After graduating in 2018, she hopes to marry the creative ambitions of her childhood — "I loved to make people laugh, and I was always making things, from newsletters and rap music videos



"I WANT TO
CHANGE TRENDS,
CHANGE MINDSETS,
CHANGE BUSINESSES."

"You see these people every day, so you establish a connection and sense of community that is really nice," she said. "Walking through the hallways and seeing people you know is never a bad thing."

Through her experiences at Bauer College, Nguyen says she has noticed a common thread among everyone she's met.

"Bauer people have heart," she said. "The community is so diverse, with so many different people with backgrounds coming together. Everyone is really open to meeting new people, which is a good quality, especially in business."

to paper creations." — with the business skills she's cultivating at Bauer College.

"I would love to be a fashion designer with my own store, maybe write a novel or two and TV or movie scripts. And, I'm interested in acting or directing, too," Nguyen said. "I just want to go out and do all these things on my bucket list and make all these passions I have come to life."



FORMER MATTRESS FIRM CEO
STEPHEN STAGNER HAS MADE A
NAMING GIFT TO SUPPORT BAUER
COLLEGE'S SALES INSTITUTE.

A SHARED VISION

Bauer College Announces Naming of Stagner Sales Excellence Institute

By Jessica Navarro @ Amanda Sebesta

One of the sales industry's biggest supporters has made a naming gift to support Bauer College's sales institute.

The center is now known as the Stephen Stagner Sales Excellence Institute, in recognition of the former Mattress Firm CEO, who became the company's executive chairman of the board earlier this year. Stagner has been involved with the sales program at Bauer for several years, after Stephen Stagner Sales Excellence Institute Executive Director Randy Webb connected with him to serve as a guest speaker in a course.

"Steve is passionate about the role of sales, but even more importantly, he is passionate about our students and their success," Webb said. "He shares our vision for making sure the Sales Excellence Institute continues to be the leading sales program in the country. We are excited about working with him to take our program to the next level."

For Stagner, the investment will bolster the sales profession for years to come — a career that he says touches nearly every industry.

"Sales was my passion and my life," Stagner said. "If I was going to give, I wanted to do it here because it was going to be a great place and to help people for a long time. I would like to put the profession of sales on a world platform to be honored."

Bauer College leaders founded the sales program in 1996, with a mission to become the leading global network for sales knowledge and education through exemplary research, custom executive education solutions and degree programs. Twenty years later, the institute has more than 25 sponsoring corporations

“

STEVE IS PASSIONATE ABOUT THE ROLE OF SALES, BUT EVEN MORE IMPORTANTLY, HE IS PASSIONATE ABOUT OUR STUDENTS AND THEIR SUCCESS.

”

RANDY WEBB,
EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR –
STEPHEN STAGNER
SALES EXCELLENCE
INSTITUTE

and over 2,200 alumni in its Program for Excellence in Selling (PES), which competitively inducts just 160 students each year from an applicant pool of approximately 400.

Sales students at Bauer learn by experiencing live selling, including mentorships, sponsorships for a student-run golf tournament and sales career fair, and partnerships. The program also hosts frequent guest speakers and partners on campus throughout the year to speak to students and recruit them for internships and eventual full-time positions.

After observing the depth and breadth of Bauer's sales curriculum as a guest speaker, Stagner remained involved with the college as a strong PES supporter, recruiting several graduates of the program and frequently sharing his experiences with students.

The man who opened his first Mattress Firm franchise in Atlanta in 1996 with only \$1,300 in the bank and was leading the corporation less than a decade later clearly has experience with building and growing an organization. Stagner said his vision for the institute is to build on its history of student success and to help it become the world's foremost authority on the profession of sales.

"We are uniquely fortunate to have someone who believes that the best investment is the investment in students — an investment in human capital," Bauer College Dean Latha Ramchand said. "Steve believes in what we do, he speaks in our classes, and he recruits our students to work for him. In other words, he walks the talk."




COVER
STORY

F
A C
U L T Y
F O C U S

B Y W E N D
E L L B R O C K

BAUER PROFESSORS ARE LEADERS IN RESEARCH, SERVICE, TEACHING



In this issue, we salute
the Bauer College
faculty — the 82 tenure
track and 51 non-tenure track
professors who make the college a
beacon of research, teaching
and service.

As you will read here, being a professor involves
much more than lecturing and grading papers.

Bauer faculty publish scholarly articles reviewed
by their peers.

They write textbooks.

They dispense expertise and opinions to reporters and industry
practitioners.

They develop new programs, certificates, learning opportunities
and centers of excellence.

They lead study-abroad trips.

They mentor.

They advise.

And they give back. (According to Bauer's Office of Development, faculty-staff giving set a new record last year,
with 22 percent participation. This year, a new goal of 50 percent has been set.)

While it's easy to monetize giving, Bauer faculty say helping students is the greatest reward.

"By being a faculty member, you have the opportunity every year, every semester, to be that person that makes a
difference in somebody's life," says Edward Blair, chair of the Department of Marketing & Entrepreneurship.

Just about any professor you meet on campus can tell you about that key person who made an impact
on his or her life.

Now, Blair says, "You get to pay it forward."

Here, then, is a look at how faculty members within Bauer's five academic departments are making a difference.



Accountancy & Taxation: Giving Back to the Community

ACCOUNTANCY & TAXATION



1 OF 3 CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE NATIONWIDE IN INTERNAL AUDIT

25

GRADUATE AND UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS RANK IN TOP 25 AMONG COMPARABLE SCHOOLS



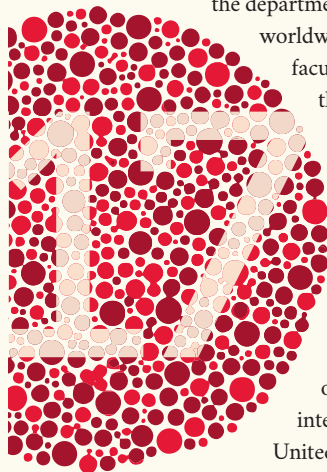
FACULTY DOCTORAL DEGREES FROM MIT, UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO, CARNEGIE MELLON AND UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Department chair Kaye J. Newberry feels great empathy for students who work their way through school and take classes at night. She followed a similar path. Today she leads a department that includes 18 tenure-track faculty, two emeritus professors, 13 full-time clinical assistant professors, 14 lecturers and 44 teaching/research assistants.

Close to half of the tenure-track faculty and five of the clinical professors have come on board since 2010 — after receiving doctoral degrees from the likes of MIT, the University of Chicago, Carnegie Mellon and the University of Michigan.

No surprise, then, that the department ranks among the top and has upped its research game considerably in recent years.

“For the last accreditation review period (2010–14), the department ranked 17th worldwide in terms of faculty publications in the top five academic accounting journals,” Newberry reports.



Additionally, it is only one of three Centers of Excellence for internal audit in the United States, and its

graduate and undergraduate program rank in the top 25 among comparable schools.

And then there is the department’s service component, which allows students to build community via experiential learning.

While students volunteer with Neighborhood Tax Centers to help low-income families prepare their taxes, Professor Saleha Khumawala’s microfinance initiative has blossomed into SURE (Stimulating Urban Renewal through Entrepreneurship), a program that allows students to earn course credit while helping entrepreneurs in underserved Houston communities. Khumawala’s work has been lauded by U.S. congressmen, the Texas governor and the mayor of Houston.

THE DEPARTMENT IS RANKED 17TH IN THE WORLD IN SCHOLARLY ACCOUNTING PUBLICATIONS.

Thanks to a staggering demand for supply chain workers in the job market, Bauer's Department of Decision & Information Sciences has grown dramatically in recent years.

The department boasts 650 undergraduate majors (vs. 200 six years ago) and employs 36 full-time faculty members. Leading this epic change is retired Navy commander Everette Gardner — on faculty since 1987, department chair since 2010.

“One of our goals is to become a recognized thought leader in supply chain management research and education, and we are making progress,” says Gardner, predicting the department will break into Gartner’s top 10 ranking this year or next.

How will it get there?

“We have completely overhauled and modernized the supply chain curriculum, launched the Bauer Supply Chain Forum (which we plan to grow into a center) and hired seven new faculty (five tenure track and two clinical),” Gardner says.

GARTNER RANKS BAUER'S UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM IN SUPPLY CHAIN 14TH IN THE NATION.

In 2012, the department reinstated its dormant doctoral programs in MIS and SCM, and in 2015, it inaugurated an MS degree in SCM.

New faculty members include Ming Zhao in business analytics and Mark Grimes in MIS. They join faculty heavyweights Wynne Chin (“our biggest research star,” Gardner says), Funda Sahin (the new president of the Decision Sciences Institute, now based at Bauer) and Richard Scamell, who doubles as associate dean for student affairs and multiple-award-winning teacher.



D E C I S & I N F O R M A T I O N S C I E N C E S

Decision & Information Sciences: Rebooting to Meet Tomorrow's Challenges



**BAUER SUPPLY CHAIN FORUM
LAUNCHED TO CONNECT
INDUSTRY AND ACADEMIA**

7

**NEW FACULTY
MEMBERS HIRED
SINCE 2010**



**REINSTITUTED
DOCTORAL PROGRAMS
IN MIS AND SCM**



Finance: Preparing Leaders for the Energy Capital of the World

FINANCE



THE GUTIERREZ ENERGY MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE TRAINS GLOBAL ENERGY PROFESSIONALS AND LEADERS

1 OF 4

THE COUGAR INVESTMENT FUND IS ONE OF FOUR STUDENT RUN FUNDS THAT RELIES ON INDIVIDUAL INVESTORS RATHER THAN ENDOWMENT FUNDS



RECENT FACULTY HIRES HOLD DOCTORAL DEGREES FROM WHARTON AND KELLOGG SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

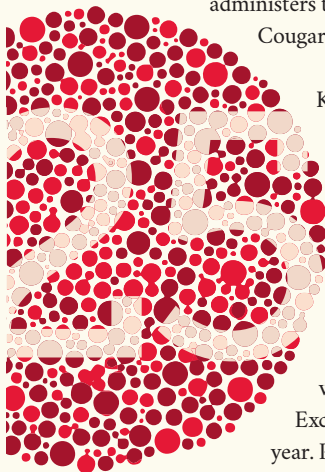
When Praveen Kumar became department chair in 2001, Houston's energy industry made it clear that "they did not look at Bauer as a place to hire their future business leaders."

That was the reason he wanted to start the Global Energy Management Institute (now known as the Gutierrez Energy Management Institute, thanks to a recent gift from energy executive Joe Gutierrez).

Today, he credits GEMI with helping Bauer build a unique brand in the energy capital of the world.

"We definitely have one of the most comprehensive energy business curriculums of any business school in the world," Kumar says.

That's a tribute to the quality of research and teaching coming out of the department, which also administers the prestigious Cougar Investment Fund.



Kumar estimates that the department ranks about 25th nationally. It includes research stars Kris Jacobs, Vijay Yerramilli, Hitesh Doshi and Paul Povel, who won a UH Teaching Excellence Award this year. Previously, Tom

George (see profile, Page 10) and Kumar himself won the teaching honor.

"So we now have three full professors who are research active and also have gotten the university teaching award," Kumar says. "That makes me very proud."

Recently, the department hired Sang Byung Seo, who holds a Ph.D. from Wharton, and Kevin Roshak, who completed his doctorate at the Kellogg School of Management.

"That tells you the national prominence that our department has been able to achieve," Kumar says.

THE DEPARTMENT HAS HELPED BUILD A UNIQUE BRAND FOR BAUER IN THE GLOBAL ENERGY INDUSTRY.

The department's two specialty programs — the Wolff Center for Entrepreneurship and the Program for the Excellence in Selling — are widely regarded as among the best in the nation.

It's a testament to the quality of these programs that they picked up both this year's university-wide Teaching Excellence Awards for team teaching.

"Those are two outstanding programs, and the reason they are outstanding is because of the way the faculty individually delivers value but also works together to deliver an integrated program," says department chair Edward Blair. (Professor Amy Vandaveer also won a teaching award in the clinical category.)

Another way to express the success of the WCE is by the number of businesses its alumni create.

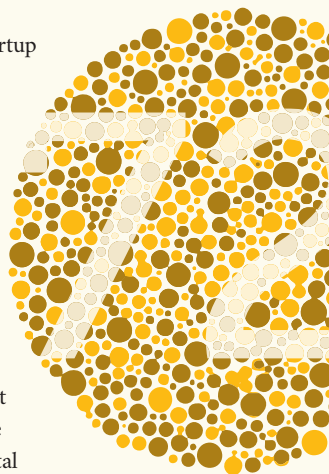
"Students who have graduated within the past five years have started 72 businesses with \$7.7 million in funding," Blair says. And that does not include the 17 companies launched at RED Labs,

**IN THE PAST
FIVE YEARS,
BAUER
STUDENTS
HAVE STARTED
72 BUSINESSES
WITH \$7.7
MILLION IN
FUNDING.**

the university's startup accelerator for students, since 2013.

Meanwhile, the department that has dominated the Google Online Marketing Challenge in recent years will continue to build on its digital marketing strengths, as reflected by recent hires William J. Zahn and Kitty Y. Wang.

Zahn will be the department's "point person" in digital marketing, Blair says, while Wang is an expert in quantitative marketing. And just this year, the department added an MS in Marketing.



M A R K E T I N G & E N T R E P R E N E U R S H I P

Marketing & Entrepreneurship: Starting New Businesses in the Digital Age



TWO UNIVERSITY-WIDE
TEACHING EXCELLENCE
AWARDS FOR TEAM TEACHING

\$7.7

MILLION IN FUNDING CREATED
BY BUSINESSES DEVELOPED
THROUGH THE WOLFF CENTER
FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP



NEW MASTER OF SCIENCE
IN MARKETING RESPONDS TO
INDUSTRY DEMAND



M A N A G E M E N T

Management: Getting Ahead of the Curve with Online Offerings



PLANS TO LAUNCH COLLEGE'S
FIRST FULLY ONLINE DEGREE
PROGRAM IN 2017



FACULTY CREATED
FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND
TEXTBOOK REGARDING HUMAN
RESOURCES IN THE
OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY



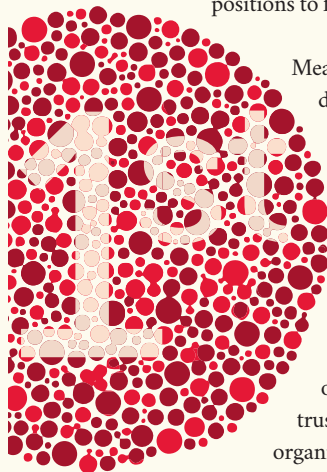
FOUR FACULTY MEMBERS
ARE EDITORS OF
SCHOLARLY JOURNALS

Under Steve Werner, the longtime faculty member who became department chair in 2015, the Department of Management is reinventing itself for the future.

In 2017, the department plans to roll out the college's first fully online degree, the MS in Management, targeting "students with bachelor's degrees in humanities, liberal arts and other areas who really want a little more business background before getting into the workforce," Werner explains.

"We are trying to make a much stronger push into online classes, because what we are finding is that that's what the students want," Werner says. "We are trying to offer a lot more classes online, so we are hiring people who have a lot of online teaching experience."

Two new clinical professors with online experience will be added in the fall, with more tenure-track positions to follow.



Meanwhile, the department remains a global powerhouse in research and publishing. New faculty member Tony Kong (see profile, page 14) has authored dozens of articles on topics of trust and positive organizational culture.

Werner is the lead author of "Managing Human Resources in the Oil and Gas Industry," a first-of-its-kind textbook.

And the department is home to a number of editors of scholarly journals: Leanne Atwater is senior editor of *Leadership Quarterly*, where Dusya Vera just became an associate editor. Chet Miller is associate editor of *Academy of Management Discoveries*, and Laura B. Cardinal is associate editor of *Academy of Management Annals*.

Ph.D. candidate Klavdia Ballard won this year's UH Teaching Excellence Award in the graduate-student category. That her Introduction to Organizational Behavior course is taught in an auditorium, Werner says, makes her feat all the more remarkable.

THE DEPARTMENT IS FOCUSING ON ONLINE OFFERINGS IN THE COMING YEAR.



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with Bauer Executive Education

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BAUER
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS
UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON



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ENJOY THE RIDE

Bauer College Board Chair
Reflects on Journey from
Student to Alumnus and
Now, Supporter

*Intro and Interview by
Jessica Navarro*



ALUMNUS AND
RETIRED PWC
PARTNER PAUL
PEACOCK (BBA '81)
LEADS THE BAUER
COLLEGE BOARD, A
GROWING GROUP OF
EXECUTIVES AND
ENTREPRENEURS
WHO ADVISE DEAN
LATHA RAMCHAND
AND PROVIDE
GUIDANCE ON
STRATEGY, COLLEGE
CURRICULUM AND
ENGAGEMENT.

PAUL PEACOCK IS ON A MISSION.

The 1981 BBA alumnus and retired PwC partner leads the Bauer College Board, a group of more than 40 executives and entrepreneurs who advise Dean Latha Ramchand, providing critical input on issues including strategy, thought leadership, student engagement and curricular relevance.

As chair, Peacock has helped to grow the Bauer College Board roster and to define its mission and charge. But, he's not stopping there. This year, board members are working alongside college task forces on branding and communications, alumni engagement and student recruitment. Peacock is also looking to continue to expand the board's membership.

In addition to his service on the board, Peacock has been actively engaged with the college over the last several years, named a Distinguished Alumnus in 2009. He earned an award for Distinguished Service to the college's Department of Accountancy & Taxation Accounting Advisory Board in 2011 for his service between 2002-2011 (as a founding member and chair), and in 2013, he was named AAB's Alumni of the Year.



TELL US ABOUT YOUR HISTORY WITH THE BAUER COLLEGE BOARD AND HOW YOU CAME TO BE CHAIR.

It has been a wonderful ride. I came to campus about six years ago — I remember that it was a Friday — to listen to a board member speak. After listening to her speak, I approached the dean and said, 'I'd like to be part of your board,' and after some discussion, I was asked to join. About that same time the board was going through some transitions and the current chair was looking for his successor. I'd only been on the board for six months, and they looked at me.

I tell everybody that I've been on the board long enough to have been through two five year accreditations with the AACSB (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business) and happily watched the dean and her team manage through both reviews.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BOARD'S PRIORITIES?

We are in a period of transition right now. One of our goals is to grow the size of the board. We're currently at 30 to 40 members with a goal of 60 to 70. The reason for that is we want to have scale. And, we also want our board to look like the city of Houston. We also want to grow in geography. We're interviewing members outside of Houston, and we're going to put technology to good use for that. Certainly, with size and scale, we're afforded much broader expertise and talent.

Currently, the dean has three primary goals — talent recruitment, branding and communication, and community and alumni involvement — that were identified by the dean and her team as part of the last AACSB accreditation process. All three of these align with her top priorities. Due to the size and

scale of our board at this point, we've been able to establish three committees all chaired by board members that focus on each one of those goals.

I look for a board that works. I look for a board that's going to contribute. I think at this point, we have the talent and the energy to take us to the next level.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE ON CAMPUS FIRST AS A STUDENT AND THE TRANSITION INTO YOUR ROLE ON THE BAUER COLLEGE BOARD.

My first course at the University of Houston was a fundamental accounting course. I was the second highest grade in the class with a B-plus. I thought at the time, 'I don't know what I got myself into.' But it laid a great foundation for the rest of my college career and told me I was going to have to work really hard to get the grades that I needed to graduate.

I graduated with an accounting degree and joined PwC (at the time, Coopers & Lybrand). Every firm puts staff and partners on campus to help attract talent, and I was in charge of doing that at UH. From there, I became the firm relationship coordinator in charge of all things University of Houston.

Along the way, a group of Bauer alumni started the college's Accounting Advisory Board. I was the second or third chair of that board, which serves a great purpose focusing solely on accounting and auditing. At the time, the accounting profession was going through significant change with Sarbanes-Oxley, and as chair of the curriculum committee and with help from others, we were able to suggest new curriculum around enterprise risk management and internal controls. We also had AAB board members very active in internal audit who helped Bauer become a Center



THE BAUER COLLEGE BOARD ROSTER INCLUDES LEADERS FROM A RANGE OF SECTORS, INCLUDING ENERGY, TECHNOLOGY, HEALTH CARE, BANKING AND FINANCE, SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT, AND RETAIL.

of Excellence in Internal Audit. From there, it was logical that I wanted to take on more responsibilities and become a Bauer College Board member.

HOW DID YOU APPLY WHAT YOU LEARNED AS A STUDENT IN YOUR PROFESSIONAL CAREER WITH PWC?

No doubt about it, I was able to fall back on the foundation of hard work. Getting that first grade was very difficult, and all the other grades that came after that were played out by that first class. Certainly, public accounting is not known as an easy profession. We expect a lot of our folks in terms of energy, enthusiasm, and time and commitment. I look back on the University of Houston as being a great foundation for everything I achieved with PwC.

WHAT KIND OF TRANSFORMATION HAVE YOU SEEN AT BAUER COLLEGE AND UH IN THE LAST FIVE TO 10 YEARS?

I'm certainly jealous of what we have going on these days versus what we had back then. The facilities available now to the business students are exceptional, with the Insperty Center, Cemo Hall and Melcher Hall. A number of board members will sit around and talk about

the old days — the days that we had our classes over in the Heyne building in the basement.

And, the faculty has grown to accommodate the facilities. Bauer College has energetic faculty supported by a good team, and everyone I work with and meet at the college is doing a wonderful job.

Everywhere I go, people know I'm associated with UH — my tennis club, family and friends, they all want to know what's going on at UH. It all started with Tier One status, and then we built a new stadium and have a football team that ends the year at No. 8. That momentum and energy carries over to the business school. People want to go to Bauer. You can get a great education here in the fourth largest city in the world. And, I can sense that enthusiasm from the folks wanting to join the Bauer College Board.

WHY DO YOU THINK IT'S IMPORTANT FOR HOUSTON TO HAVE A LEADING BUSINESS SCHOOL WITH A GLOBAL FOCUS?

We are sitting in the energy capital of the world, amongst other things. The city has one of the world's largest ports. Every company needs talent. If we don't grow that talent locally, that talent's going to come from outside the city. We certainly have it in Bauer. It provides every company right here in the city the opportunity to hire from Bauer. And more importantly,

as they hire from Bauer, the expectations are that they put time and effort back into the university as happy alumni or community members to help the university grow.

WHAT DO YOU SEE ON THE HORIZON FOR BAUER COLLEGE? WHAT GOALS DO YOU HAVE FOR THE BOARD?

When you look at the board, we're here to help our dean get to the next level. That's our number one goal. And as I described earlier, the three committees around alumni and community engagement, talent recruitment, and branding and communications are important. If we can develop those committees as part of the Bauer College Board, strategically aligning with our dean's top three priorities, we can be happy we have contributed to Bauer's success.

I'm very proud of Dean Ramchand and everything she has been able to accomplish in the past few years. I'm very proud of the faculty and staff for all the time and commitment they put into making Bauer College successful. I'm very proud of the Bauer College Board for everything we have been able to achieve in the past, and I'm looking at this board to take it up a notch. We're bigger; we're faster. I want to see results, and you will see the results as they transform over the next few years.

COMMUNITY
FEATURE

Bauer alumna
Sasha Volguina is
launching BudBox,
a grain germinator
aimed at restoring
digestive health.





GRAIN EXPECTATIONS

Entrepreneurship Alumna Ventures Into Germinated Food Business

 **By Priscilla Aceves • Photos by Nicki Evans and Kaelyn Williams**

Less than two years after graduating from Bauer College, Sasha Volguina (BBA '13) was living a life that resembled most college graduates' dreams — working a stable job with a team.

But something was missing for the Wolff Center for Entrepreneurship alumna, who had always dreamed of starting her own company.

"Working full-time with an amazing team was one of the best learning experiences I've had," Volguina said. "But I wanted to push myself to grow faster and learn quicker, and I was open to taking risks that I wasn't ready for right out of college."

So, she decided to chat with Dave Cook, director of mentoring programs at the Wolff Center, to seek some guidance. Cook stays in contact with graduates of the program and remains a close mentor, Volguina said.

"He helped me understand what was important to me and gave me the assurance that I should do what I felt was right," she added.

Before leaving her job, Volguina said she wasn't ready to face the risks of building a business. But the conversation with Cook helped change her perspective.

"Now I see it more as an opportunity to fail. A lot of people don't have the luxury to quit their day jobs and try something new," Volguina said. "I realized I have my valuable mid-20s to spend trying things — maybe failing, but that's okay. I'll always learn from failure."

With that in mind, Volguina quit her job and teamed up with her father, a medical researcher with over 35 years of experience, to develop a product that would most effectively help the greatest amount of people.



After many discussions about health challenges facing Americans, they decided to invent a product that would help offset the damage caused by modern foods.

“We realized that digestive health is plummeting, largely due to the over-processing and modification of many foods in the modern American diet,” Volguina said. “So, we asked ourselves, how can we help minimize the damage caused by modern food, improve the digestive health of Americans and educate people about their microbiological health?”

This led them to create BudBox, a grain germinator that correctly grows grain to its nutritional peak for consumption, restoring the necessary healthy bacteria and active enzymes often stripped from foods during processing. The product, which will be sold in a kit alongside a grain starter pack and detailed cookbook, has the potential to restore digestive health to many Americans, Volguina said.

Volguina and her father are currently patenting the BudBox, have developed a prototype and are working with legal and engineering teams to begin funding the product.

The transition from working a consistent job to launching a business has required Volguina to work well under pressure and impending deadlines. But that factor has never intimidated her. After all, a high-pressure environment was part of what attracted her to the Wolff Center in the first place.

“The fact that it’s such a rigorous and life-changing program really enticed me,” she said. “Whenever I’m given a lot to do in a short period of time and have to learn to adapt very quickly, that’s when I feel the most at home.”

Volguina credits Bauer’s entrepreneurship program with providing her a network of support, including Associate Director Ken Jones, who recently sat down with Volguina and her father to discuss and improve their business plan. Her support team also includes fellow alumni from her WCE class and mentor Kathi Woolsey. Volguina said the Wolff Center also helped her learn the fundamentals of starting a business and prioritizing her personal goals.

“WCE taught both business acumen and personal growth strategies in a comprehensive curriculum that helps the student realize their best self,” she added. “The Wolff Center teaches you how to understand and follow your purpose, rank your priorities, and provides tools to pursue them.”

Now with the “basics” under her belt, Volguina is learning how to apply these skills to launch her business.

“They gave me the fundamentals,” she said, “and now it’s time to create my own reality and be the best me that I can be.”



“

A LOT OF PEOPLE DON'T HAVE THE LUXURY TO QUIT THEIR DAY JOBS AND TRY SOMETHING NEW.

I REALIZED I HAVE MY VALUABLE MID-20s TO SPEND TRYING THINGS—MAYBE FAILING, BUT THAT'S OKAY. I'LL ALWAYS LEARN FROM FAILURE.

”

BACK TO SCHOOL

Bauer Alumni Share Experience with Students as Faculty Members

By Amanda Sebesta

For some members of the Bauer College faculty, understanding the student experience is easy.

More than 50 Bauer faculty started their journeys like every other student in the college and are now part of the college's extensive alumni network.

Here, we highlight two faculty members who graduated from Bauer College and are back on campus, bringing their firsthand knowledge to the classroom.



LISA BERRY • BBA '03, MSACCY '10 • Lecturer, Accountancy & Taxation

Teaching is in Lisa Berry's blood.

"I have always wanted to teach college-level students. I found that out a long time ago when I was a teaching assistant in the Bauer Accounting Lab," Berry said.

Berry graduated from Bauer in 2003 with her BBA in accounting and then went on to work for several major companies doing financial reporting, accounting and internal auditing.

"I have over 10 years of work experience in the industry. I am a big believer in working full-time and teaching part-time, which allows me to bring cutting-edge knowledge to the classroom. It makes teaching fun for me and learning fun for the students," she added.

Berry pursued her MS Accountancy degree from Bauer in 2008, graduating two years later. As a graduate student, she helped the college's Department of Accountancy & Taxation launch one of only six Centers of Excellence in Internal Auditing in the world. She is also the founder of the Internal Audit Student Association.

Berry is a certified fraud examiner and a certified internal auditor and a member of the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners and the Institute of Internal Auditors. During her graduate studies, she worked on campus in the UH Department of Internal Auditing. This spring, she became director of business services of the university's Division of Administration and Finance.

Berry, who teaches enterprise risk management, says that she sees a similar sense of drive and passion in Bauer students.

"The quality of our students is excellent," she said. "Most Bauer students are working and going to school, which puts them way ahead of their competition from other Texas universities."

Berry, who joined the Bauer faculty last spring, aims to give her students the kind of transformational experience her professors provided.

"I want to be remembered as an educator that cared about students and helped them excel in their academic, professional and personal lives," she said.

“I WANT STUDENTS TO KNOW HOW PASSIONATE I AM ABOUT THEIR LEARNING AND THAT I CARE ABOUT THEM AS INDIVIDUALS.”

DARLENE SERRATO
(MBA '80, PH.D. '86)
CLINICAL ASSISTANT
PROFESSOR, ACCOUNTANCY
& TAXATION



“I WANT TO BE REMEMBERED AS AN EDUCATOR THAT CARED ABOUT STUDENTS AND HELPED THEM EXCEL IN THEIR ACADEMIC, PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL LIVES.”

LISA BERRY
(BBA '03, MSACCY '10)
LECTURER, ACCOUNTANCY
& TAXATION



DARLENE SERRATO • MBA '80, PH.D. '86 • Clinical Assistant Professor, Accountancy & Taxation

Darlene Serrato came from a small town, but her goals were always larger than life.

Growing up in Weimar, TX, Serrato was a high school cheerleader and class salutatorian. She came to Houston for college and never left.

Serrato earned a bachelor of science in math before working as a programmer at Gulf Oil. She then pursued graduate coursework at Bauer College, earning an MBA and then a Ph.D., where she realized she loved teaching.

“I started my bachelor’s degree wanting to be a teacher, but then changed to programming,” she said. “Once I was in business, I came back to school to get my MBA. During that time, one of the professors talked to me about a Ph.D. because of my affinity for accounting. During the program I taught and fell in love with teaching.”

Serrato began her teaching career at University of Houston-Clear Lake and Houston Baptist University, where she received the Advisor of the Year Award and Faculty Woman of the Year Award and was nominated multiple times for the Opal Goolsby Teaching Award.

Last fall, Serrato came back to her alma mater, joining Bauer College’s faculty in the Department of Accountancy & Taxation and reconnecting with some professors who taught during her time as a student.

“Bauer has an excellent reputation, and I wanted to be part of that team,” Serrato said. “I also wanted to be at a larger university where I could help more students.”

With her roots firmly planted at Bauer, Serrato says her focus is to make an impact on her students and teach them the importance of accounting.

“I want students to know how passionate I am about their learning and that I care about them as individuals,” she added. “I worked in business before I had any accounting background, and I know how important accounting is. Not everyone will love it like I do, but it is very important to understand the concepts to be successful in the business world.”

STREAM OF SUCCESS

Entrepreneurship Alumni Focus on Global Access to Clean Water

By Priscilla Aceves

Eric Beydoun (BBA '14) wasn't sure what he wanted to do when he first came to Bauer College.

He was attracted to the University of Houston campus for its diversity — he grew up in France, and his parents are from Brazil and Lebanon. But, it wasn't until he met a fellow rugby teammate enrolled in Bauer's Wolff Center for Entrepreneurship that he first considered a future running his own business.

"I didn't really know what to expect, but I think it's the best decision I ever made," he said.

For Ivette Rubio (BBA '14), the path to entrepreneurship started at home.

"My mom came here from El Salvador, and she is actually an entrepreneur herself. She started a food company which still runs today," Rubio said. "So, I kind of grew up learning how entrepreneurship can really affect someone's life."

As students, Rubio and Beydoun came together with three other entrepreneurship classmates in the Wolff Center to develop a business plan for the only gel technology that filters water using food grade materials. The bio-beads, developed by UH researchers, are designed to remove nitrates, phosphates and heavy metals from contaminated water in a unique biodegradable and cost-effective method. The technology has the potential to improve water filtration systems in residential, municipal and industrial industries around the world.

They named their company WAVVE Stream — taking the first letter of the word for "water" in English, Spanish, Swedish, Russian and French, the native languages of the five students on the team.

"We were five people from Mexico, El Salvador, Sweden, Russia and France," Beydoun said. "We are a global team, dealing with a global problem."

While students in the Wolff Center, the team developed a plan to commercialize the technology and competed against other business students across the globe, securing a host of podium finishes and cash prizes. The team also found support in RED Labs, the UH startup accelerator and technology coworking space. All five students on the business plan team eventually graduated, with Beydoun and Rubio choosing to stay with the company as CEO and COO, respectively.

Together, they have transformed the project into a viable startup with networks, scientists and an impressive list of potential customers. Earlier this year, they won the RECESS National Pitch Competition, powered by Southwest Airlines, which featured 15 of the leading college startups in a "March Madness" style competition, including Babson College, University of Pennsylvania, University of Southern California, Dartmouth College, Cornell University and others. The Bauer alumni team won first place and audience choice and were featured along with other

finalists on *Forbes'* website as one of the most innovative college startups.

WAVVE Stream remains faithful to its initial vision as an international company. After negotiating license rights with the university and developing a patent for their technology, Beydoun and Rubio have secured business relationships with several large water companies.

"We have Agua de Valencia in Spain that has 350 municipal plants around Spain serving three million people. They're interested in implementing our technology into their plants at some point," Beydoun said. "Then in Milwaukee, we're collaborating with the water council, Veolia, the biggest water company in the world that is really trying to help bring our technology to market. So, we're on the shoulders of those giants."

The alumni credit WAVVE Stream's success to the skills and business perspective they were taught within the Wolff Center for Entrepreneurship.

"It really taught us a way of life," Beydoun said. "I'm with Ivette in this company, and we had the same education on how a business should work. We have the same values and training that we use in this business and in our everyday lives. That is really a skill you can only find in the Wolff Center."



“

**ACCESS TO CLEAN
WATER IS A GLOBAL
ISSUE, AND WE ARE
A GLOBAL COMPANY.**

”



WHAT STARTED AS A
CLASS PROJECT FOR
IVETTE RUBIO (BBA '14)
AND ERIC BEYDOUN
(BBA '14) IS NOW AN
AWARD-WINNING
COMPANY LOOKING TO
TACKLE A GLOBAL ISSUE.



ANAM KADER GRADUATED FROM BAUER COLLEGE IN 2015 WITH A BBA AND NOW WORKS AS A CONTRACTS ANALYST FOR SHELL.

FLYING HIGH

Recent Alumna Encourages Pride, Involvement from Fellow Graduates

By Anam Kader

Stepping into the hallways of Bauer as an alumna, I am nostalgic for all the time I spent there.

There is no correct adjective to describe the college experience — it is a time where you make mistakes, get an overload of knowledge, learn how to manage your time, grow as an individual, gain many friendships, develop professionalism and make some of your best memories. These experiences are what shape and prepare you for the so-called “real world.”

Bauer College is thriving with opportunities that will guide you to succeed in your career. If you are paying thousands of dollars in tuition, you should make the most of all the college has to offer. Our business school has multiple student organizations that allow you to network with your peers who are your support system in a class, soon-to-be colleagues at work, or the ones who will hire you in their respective companies. These organizations provide exposure to companies through career mixers and workshops, the best opportunity to be noticed by recruiters. The case competitions or group projects in the classrooms provide you the time to work on your soft skills — interactions with a diverse group of individuals, the ability to present to a large group and time management. My success throughout Bauer’s undergraduate program and my current career at Shell is from being fully engaged in the student organization ISM Bauer, now called Bauer SPO, and by getting guidance from my supply chain professor, Victor Wayhan.

The University of Houston is growing and building a great reputation, but it is our responsibility as alumni to support the place that provided us with education and opportunity. What kind of alumni will you be?

I am the kind of alumna who drives around with a UH decal on my car and has a UH flag hanging in my office at work.

And yes, I am the kind of alumna who loves to spend my Saturdays at TDECU Stadium cheering on the football team and spends my free time after work volunteering at Bauer SPO events.

As students, we gain so much from our university that it is imperative to give back as much as we can. As recent graduates, we may not have the financial capabilities to donate to our alma mater as of yet, but volunteering our time is just as enriching. I want to see as much UH pride in Houston as our neighboring universities across the state of Texas have.

As a Bauer student, I often heard the phrase “Coogs hire Coogs,” which has stayed with me throughout the years. If we want the value of our degree to exponentially grow, we have to gain recognition from across the nation. We have Bauer graduates represented at Fortune 500 companies, but we need those companies to be dominated by Cougars. The more we show how Bauer graduates are capable of working next to Ivy League graduates, the more valuable our degrees become. At Shell, we have an entirely volunteer-based Bauer College recruiting team, individuals who use our personal time after work to come to campus to help students develop the skills needed for success and to hire the best and brightest.

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I WANT THE WORLD TO KNOW HOW STRONG BAUER COLLEGE ALUMNI ARE. I WOULD LOVE TO SEE MORE BAUER GRADUATES DOMINATING LEADERSHIP POSITIONS IN THE WORKFORCE.

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I want the world to know how strong Bauer College alumni are. I would love to see more Bauer graduates dominating leadership positions in the workforce. I would love to see the Houston community coming together to support the university and appreciate everything it has to offer.

And, I know that I play a part in making all of this happen. So do you. All of these changes can be made possible by the current alumni and future graduates of Bauer College and UH.

I’ve made a promise to give back and advocate for my alma mater. As alumni, it is our responsibility to enable the growth and potential of our school. Now, I’d like for you to join me and make the same promise — fly your UH flag proudly, hire a Bauer graduate, mentor a Bauer student, come back to campus for events and make sure everyone you meet in the so-called “real world” knows how amazing your school is.

MORE THAN JUST A FUNDRAISER, THE GIRL SCOUT COOKIE PROGRAM TEACHES FIVE ESSENTIAL BUSINESS LESSONS, CHAVEZ SAYS, INCLUDING GOAL SETTING, DECISION MAKING, MONEY MANAGEMENT, PEOPLE SKILLS AND BUSINESS ETHICS.



SMART COOKIE

Two-Time Bauer Alumna Leads Marketing Efforts for Girl Scouts of Southeast Texas

By Wendell Brock

Connie Chavez (BBA '02, MBA '08) credits her parents with inspiring her to work hard and give back. If it hadn't been for their support, Chavez — now the senior director of marketing and communications for Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council — is not sure she could have finished her undergraduate degree at Bauer College.

The oldest of three kids, Chavez grew up in the Near Northside neighborhood, attended John H. Reagan High School and volunteered at San Jose Clinic, where her mother worked.

"My mother really instilled in me an appreciation for volunteerism and giving back," says Chavez, who has worked in the non-profit world for most of her career. "I spent just about every summer of my teenage years helping out at the clinic — filing, translating, anything I could do to help." (She later honed her professional skills with the YMCA of Greater Houston, United Way of Greater Houston, Harris County Hospital District and, since 2008, Girl Scouts.)

Chavez's father was a major influence, too.

"He was a hard worker," she recalls, "so he instilled in me a strong work ethic."

Sadly, he died before Chavez could earn her BBA in marketing, which made it all the more important for her to honor his memory. "When I got my college ring, I put an inscription inside dedicating it to him."

Today, Chavez — who oversees marketing and communications for one of the nation's largest Girl Scout councils — has two small children of her own (with a proud Cougar alumnus), and being there for them is a big part of who she is. Though she was not a Girl Scout as a kid, she is already planning to be her daughter's troop leader as soon as she starts kindergarten.

"Every chance I get, I tell people: 'If you have a daughter or a niece, the opportunities Girl Scouting provides for girls are invaluable.' And that is something I definitely want for my daughter."

We recently chatted with Chavez about her time at Bauer, her career and Girl Scouts.

SWEET SALES

• EACH SEASON, GIRL SCOUTS SELL ALMOST 200 MILLION PACKAGES OF GIRL SCOUT COOKIES.

• THE FIRST NATIONAL GIRL SCOUT COOKIE SALE WAS IN 1936.



Q: Why did you want to study business at Bauer College?

A: When I started college, I was really interested in marketing and how it influenced consumer behavior. Once I got deeper into the studies, I knew it was the right path for me. I did have a few opportunities to attend other colleges outside Houston, but I felt like I had a great university in my own backyard. It allowed me to stay close to my family, which to me was huge. I never felt for one second that I was missing out by not going somewhere else. It was my top choice.

Q: At what point did you decide to get your MBA?

A: I always knew I wanted to eventually have a graduate degree and the timing was right, so I went back to school (in 2006). As I was about to graduate, I received an opportunity to come work with Girl Scouts leading the communications department. It was like a homecoming because I've always enjoyed being involved with non-profits and contributing in some way to the betterment of my community. ... It just felt right.

Q: Looking back, how has your MBA helped?

A: Earning an MBA has enhanced my career path and helped me grow professionally. I feel confident in my skills and abilities, and how I can contribute to an organization's strategic objectives. And it has opened doors to opportunities that otherwise would not be available. I believe it has been invaluable to my career long-term.

Q: We'd love to hear about your work at Girl Scouts.

A: Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council is one of the largest councils in the country. We serve 61,000 girls and 17,000 volunteers in 26 counties across southeast Texas. Our mission is to build girls of courage, confidence and character who make the world a better place. And witnessing what it does for girls affirms every day why I am here.

Q: How has Girl Scouts changed over the years?

A: For years, Girl Scouting has been synonymous with cookies, camping and crafts, but the modern Girl Scout is equipped with so much more. She doesn't just sell cookies. She runs her own business. She likes roasting marshmallows by the campfire, but she's more interested in conservation and the environment. And she doesn't just make crafts; she makes decisions. Without a doubt, Girl Scouts provides girls with opportunities to gain skills that will help them succeed in the 21st century.

Q: How do you want to be involved on a personal level?

A: The thing I love about Girl Scouting is that parents are encouraged to get involved with their daughters. As the mother of a 5-year-old, that's so important to me. I want to be there for her, when she's making friends and when she's speaking up and finding her voice. And I want that for all girls.

Q: Finally, what's your favorite Girl Scout cookie?

A: Shortbread. I think it's the oldest. But honestly, I wouldn't turn any of them down.



ENTERTAINMENT ENTREPRENEUR

Bauer Alumnus Travels the World with Entertainment News Company

By Priscilla Aceves

Although Jonathan Stenvall calls Houston home, he's spent less than 12 days of the past two months in the Bayou City.

Stenvall, who graduated from Bauer College in 2010 with a BBA, spends most of his time traveling to entertainment destinations like Los Angeles, New York and even London, interviewing actors and musicians for his company, BackstageOL.com.

Launched in 2011, the business has grown into an online destination for entertainment news, with a robust website and social media presence. The media company produces behind-the-scenes interviews and previews on Fox 26 News, providing fans with access to big-name celebrities and events. Morgan Freeman, George Clooney, Helen Mirren and Melissa McCarthy are just a few of the names to appear in his "Backstage" segments in 2016. In addition, BackstageOL.com hosts

advance movie screenings in 30 different cities across the United States to give fans a first look at films soon to hit theaters.

“Our television partner Fox 26 approached my business partner, Dave Morales, about starting an online blog,” Stenvall said. “I sat in on the meeting, and we decided to launch an entertainment news website instead.”

Although he loves his job, Stenvall says didn’t always picture a future in the entertainment business. He studied finance at Bauer College and initially worked in the industry before launching BackstageOL.com

“Oil was at \$70 a barrel when I started at Bauer. The industry was hitting record profits, so naturally I expected there’d be a high demand for individuals in the workplace once I graduated,” he said.

Still, Stenvall was embedded in the entertainment industry as a student, attending shows around the city.

“I was meeting a lot of artists, managers and record labels,” he said. “I always had an interest, but never thought I’d have the opportunity to work in the industry.”

But, when the opportunity presented itself during the meeting with Morales and Fox 26 soon after graduation, Stenvall decided to take it. Part of the reason, he said, was that he felt prepared from his experiences in Bauer’s Wolff Center for Entrepreneurship. Stenvall was part of the last group of students to take a class with William Sherrill, one of the founders of the program.

“That’s what really got me interested in entrepreneurship,” he said. “I never really thought about starting my own company until that class.”

Although few days are “typical” in Stenvall’s line of work, when in Houston, he arrives early to the Fox 26 studios to air BackstageOL.com’s video segments, which he says is his favorite part of the day. He then spends the rest of his afternoon meeting with staff and clients, tracking web traffic and researching new ideas. But, Stenvall says, that routine can change completely if he’s scheduled to travel, which he does frequently.

“Every day is different than the one before,” he added. “One day I’ll be working in an editing bay for 12 hours straight, and the next I’ll be in Los Angeles at a world premiere. It’s a very fast-paced job that jumps across multiple time zones in a week.”

But that’s a great thing for the seasoned traveler who loves to see the world and meet new people through his work. Though it’s difficult for Stenvall to choose a favorite experience from running BackstageOL.

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ONE DAY I’LL BE WORKING IN AN EDITING BAY FOR 12 HOURS STRAIGHT, AND THE NEXT I’LL BE IN LOS ANGELES AT A WORLD PREMIERE. IT’S A VERY FAST-PACED JOB THAT JUMPS ACROSS MULTIPLE TIME ZONES IN A WEEK.

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com, he says he will never forget meeting actors Leonardo DiCaprio and Tom Hardy at the world premiere of *The Revenant* late last year, or talking with Jeff Daniels at the Toronto Film Festival.

A business degree can add value to any career, Stenvall says, especially if students take advantage of mentorships and opportunities to get hands-on experience.

“I wouldn’t have been able to do this if it wasn’t for my support network,” he said. “You need that support group to be able to do it because whenever you go from a salary to starting a company from scratch, it takes time. If you can get through those first couple years of 100-hour weeks with five hours of sleep, you can do it.”



VALUE ADDED

Bauer College Alumni Association President Shares Perspective on Getting Involved, Giving Back

By Patrick Gonzales (MBA '06)

Mark Twain once said, “The two most important days in your life are the day you are born and the day you find out why.”

The second part of that quote resonates with me. To me, “the day you find out why” is when you discover your calling.

I believe everyone has a unique contribution to make to the world. Each one of us possesses a one-of-a-kind combination of passions, skills and experiences. You bring something to your work that no one else can, and it's your job to discover it. And once you discover it, you honor and fulfill it.

There are many ways you can add value to the world. I chose Bauer College as part of my journey, and my reality, to help pursue my discovery of finding my talents and adding value to the world. I've learned that adding value will only become clear over time as you act.

In many ways, Bauer College has created an institution worthy of Charles T. “Ted” Bauer’s ideals of developing and growing students by delivering exceptional business education. It’s a place that teaches knowledge and experience necessary to be productive in life and enables students to do their best and discover their talents. But, your journey doesn’t end with taking classes. Honing your skills and discovering your talents is a lifelong process. That’s why it is important to get involved.

The Bauer College Alumni Association (BCAA) gives people opportunities to stay mentally active and momentum to keep moving forward toward their personal goals while opening new doors of opportunities.

BCAA is one of 35 constituent groups under the umbrella of the University of Houston Alumni Association (UHAA). It is by far one of the largest constituent groups in terms of alumni base with nearly 60,000 professionals, and one of the most active, with a full list of calendar events spread across the academic year. Our organization works in

conjunction with the support of the UHAA and several Bauer College offices, including the Office of Development, the Office of Alumni Relations and the Rockwell Career Center.

This year, we are working harder than ever to create ways to serve our alumni better. We are creating a Past Presidents Alliance Council, which invites leaders that have been instrumental to several accomplishments and contributions to the mission of BCAA, Bauer, UH and the business community to serve as a sounding board and to review our activities or suggest new opportunities for our organization.

We have also started the “We Got Your BACC (Bauer Alumni Coffee Chats)” series. The purpose for these chats is to provide another medium to help our committees stay connected, mentor each other about work, discuss BCAA activities and be advocates for events and activities. Another volunteer opportunity that BCAA is passionate about is the 9/11 Day of Service at the Houston Food Bank. On Sept. 17, we’ll be going out to make a difference in the Houston community. This is a great way to give back to the community and get connected with Bauer and UH alumni.

I encourage recent alumni to become part of BCAA, or join one of our 11 committees (see sidebar) with the mindset, “What can I offer?” Young professionals in the workforce should understand that their main job is to contribute as much as possible. If young professionals want to successfully find their way through the dynamics of organizational politics, the best way to do this is to seek ways of making everyone else’s job easier.

Amazing things happen when you come from an “others first” mindset. People who are on top of their game all have one thing in common — they all are busy adding value to others in some way. In adding value to others, they create success in themselves. I can’t think of a better way to make an impact to our college by joining a group of like-minded professionals with diverse experience and Bauer College as the common ground.



A COMMITMENT TO VALUE

More from Gonzales:

“BCAA has taken various forms throughout the years, and through trial and error, we’ve landed on 11 committees, plus an Executive Committee, that acts as a decision review board, whose purpose is to set the agenda and oversee all the committees.”

Committees:

- Engagement
- Finance
- Marketing
- MBA/EMBA
- Cougar Power Hour
- Tailgating
- Networking Breakfast
- Ted Bauer Golf Classic
- Wolff Center for Entrepreneurship
- Community Service
- Sponsorship

Interested in getting involved?
Visit bauer.uh.edu/alumni.

“AMAZING THINGS HAPPEN WHEN YOU COME FROM AN ‘OTHERS FIRST’ MINDSET.”




COMMUNITY
FEATURE

SOCIAL

Bauer MBA Alumna Manages Social Media for OtterBox • **By Jessica Navarro**

SAVVY

A portrait of Carolina Thomas, a woman with long brown hair, wearing a dark blue blazer over a maroon top and a white necklace with large white stones. She is smiling and looking directly at the camera. The background is a textured blue wall. A white rectangular frame surrounds her, with a small white triangle pointing to the right at the top right corner.

AS SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER FOR OTTERBOX, BAUER MBA ALUMNA CAROLINA THOMAS IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MANAGING THE BRAND ACROSS ALL SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS ALONGSIDE A TEAM OF SPECIALISTS.

For some, it might seem that Bauer MBA alumna Carolina Thomas speaks a foreign language — she effortlessly weaves words like snap, gif, tweet and hashtag into conversation.

But that deft social media vocabulary makes her an attractive employee for companies that recognize the value that online and digital communities can have in marketing a brand.

Thomas, who earned her MBA from Bauer College in 2011, doesn't just talk the talk. She works as a social media manager for OtterBox, a leading retailer of cases for smartphones and tablets. Her job combines strategy, marketing, advertising, customer service, content creation and data-driven decision making — skills she says she honed during her time in the Bauer MBA program.

As an MBA student, Thomas was part of a team that was the global winner of the 2011 Google Online Marketing Challenge for a Google Adwords campaign for the Houston Symphony. The all-female team competed against more than 4,400 teams from over 60 countries and was the first-ever winner from the Americas region. The team also won third place in the GOMC Non-Governmental Organization Impact Award.

Since graduating, Thomas has emerged as a leader in digital and content marketing, earning recognition from *PR Daily* and other industry organizations. She joined OtterBox in September 2014.

We caught up with Thomas recently to learn more about her work in social media and how her experience in the Bauer MBA program has impacted her career.

Tell us about your role at OtterBox as a social media manager. What's a typical day like on the job?

I manage the OtterBox brand and our team of specialists to create and execute content across all our social channels, as well as work cross-departmentally to execute integrated campaigns. I really don't have a typical day — I start by reading the latest social media news every morning to see what has changed and what other brands are doing in the space. Then I catch up on my emails and see what meetings I have that day, check our social calendar to make sure everything is scheduled accordingly, work on whatever campaign or project is going on at the time and think of ways we can push our social channels to be even better.

You earned your MBA from Bauer College in 2011. Can you tell us more about your experience as a student and now alumna?

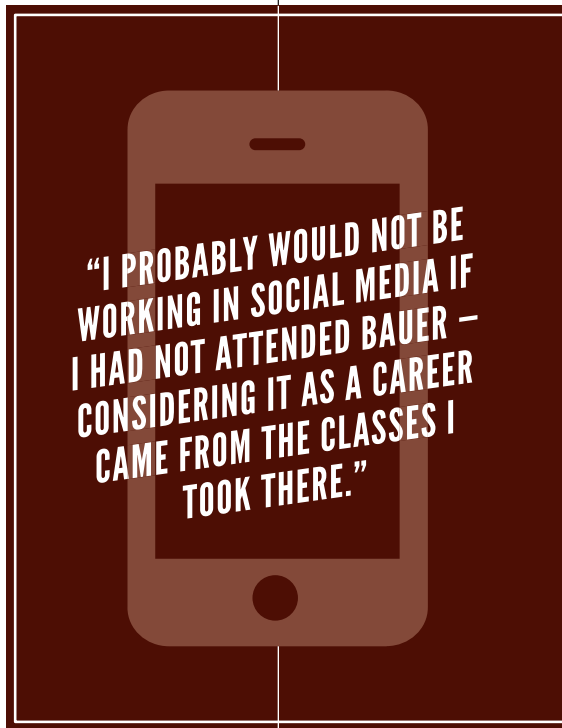
I really did love my time at Bauer! I chose the program because of the ability to customize my class schedule and the growing focus on online marketing. At Bauer, I was able to learn about Google Adwords (using a real client in a real-world scenario, which was invaluable), a skill I have applied throughout my career. I also completed integrated marketing campaign projects with a social media component, which ultimately guided me in choosing internships and later a career in social media. My MBA, the experiences I had at Bauer and my connections have benefitted my career and where I am today. As an alumna, I am in awe and so proud of all the awards and recognition Bauer has received, and deservedly so.

Tell us about a particular professor at Bauer who made an impact on you during your time as a student.

I would definitely say that Professor Steve Koch really believed in me and my passion for online marketing. He guided my team to win the Google Global Award for our Adwords campaign, which is something I will remember forever. I have directly benefitted from him bringing the Google competition opportunity to Bauer — the lessons he taught in both his Online Marketing class and later in the Google Adwords class have stayed with me through my career. I still apply those lessons today.

As a student, you were actively engaged in activities, including Bauer MBA Society and the National Association of Women MBAs. Why was it personally important for you to be involved outside the classroom?

Because I was a full-time student, the first year I had most of my classes with the same group of people. Being involved in organizations pushed me out of the comfort zone and forced me to interact with people from the other MBA programs, which in turn helped me to grow and learn (and also make friends that I still have). Both NAWMBA and the MBA Society had a great group of people involved, who set up some amazing opportunities to check out local businesses and learn valuable skills, like golf lessons and additional networking opportunities. Through student involvement, you get to be part of a larger network of people who in turn could help you out later in your career.



How have you applied what you learned as a student in your professional career in social media marketing?

Many of the classes I took specifically around online marketing I have applied in my career. I have run Adwords campaigns in the past when I was working at an agency and have since transitioned to social media advertising, which uses some of the basic principles of Adwords. I probably would not be working in social media if I had not attended Bauer — considering it as a career came from the classes I took there.

Why do you think it's important for social media marketing to be part of business school curriculum?

Social media marketing is not going away anytime soon. It is becoming a major part of reaching younger buyers through integrated marketing campaigns. Students need to learn not only the basics of marketing, but also the basics of online marketing and using social media for business. Just because you have a Facebook or like to snap your friends does not mean you know how to market a business on social.

How would you describe Bauer College to a friend or colleague who doesn't know much or anything about the school?

Bauer definitely has a family feeling, even though it is a large university in a very large city. Everyone there is very friendly and genuinely wants everyone to succeed. MBA schools can be very competitive, and don't get me wrong, Bauer students are very driven and competitive, but at the end of the day everyone built each other up. I made lifelong friends during my time there and wouldn't trade my experience for anything!

What advice would you give an incoming Bauer student?

Make sure to get involved in organizations to make the most of your experience and meet new people. Take on several internships to get real world experience and find out exactly what you like and don't like to do. Keep up with current news, especially if you are looking to do marketing, and follow what the top brands are doing — this will definitely come up in interviews. Build your own personal brand, and don't put anything on social that you don't want someone to find, and study abroad if you can — you won't regret it.





COMMUNITY
FEATURE

DATA DRIVEN

RECENT ALUMNUS APPLIES
ANALYTICS TO TAKE COMPANIES FROM
“SURVIVE TO THRIVE”

Story by Jessica Navarro • Photos by Nicki Evans

CLAYTON HARKEY

DIDN'T GROW UP
THINKING HE'D BE
A SCIENTIST OF
ANY TYPE. HE WAS
ALWAYS MORE OF
A NUMBERS GUY,
FASCINATED BY
THE WAY THINGS
WORKED.





Clayton Harkey (BBA '13) focuses on building community in his professional and personal pursuits — "You'll hear that you should network. The way I see it, you should build relationships with people."

P

iecing together a processor, motherboard and other parts to build a computer that would hum.

Taking apart a transmission and putting it back together again to hear a car roar.

Plucking the strings of his mother's acoustic guitar to see what sounds he could make.

But, during his time as an undergraduate student at Bauer College, Harkey discovered data science, an emerging field that is helping to drive business decisions and insights through statistics, data mining and predictive analytics. After graduating with a bachelor's degree in management information systems in 2013, Harkey began working professionally as a data scientist, first for Cameron and now with HP, Inc., where he recently took a lead data scientist position.

"People walk by my cube at work and see all this math and charts on my whiteboard," he said. "They say, 'You're a wizard. What you do is magic.' But I work to present my ideas by talking about the outcome and the goal rather than the equations — if you take data and use that to form your business decisions and forecast where your company can go, you can see where to cut or where to grow a certain product line or section."

Data science, Harkey says, has the power to propel an organization and outpace competitors, even in a downturn.

"In the oil industry, when oil drops below \$30 a barrel, it becomes a panic mode for some companies, trying to cut costs to keep the company alive," he said. "That's a survive mentality. With data, you move into asking, what can we do to make money while everyone else is playing the survival game?"

In Bauer's MIS program, Harkey learned to marry programming, mathematics and communication, a trio of skills that he says is essential for data science.

"Numbers are solid, they're firm, and they're not an opinion," he said. "Professional data scientists first have a programming and technical background, but without an understanding of mathematics and statistics, your data-driven decisions can be questioned. You apply math within your programming, and your communication skills are the icing on the cake when it comes to presenting models to your organization."

Good communication skills are also important for helping others understand the value that data science brings to an organization, Harkey added.

"I do have to do a lot of evangelizing for data science because it's so fresh and new," he said. "In some ways, it's a sales position. You are selling the business an idea that will save or make the company money."

The ability to collaborate across teams is also essential for success in the field, Harkey said.



“When you’re in school, you hear that you need to network,” he said. “The way I see it is that you should build relationships with people.”

He added: “Grow your friend base. Be nice. Meet as many people as you can and focus on making deep relationships. When you understand what excites people, you connect more, and you both become more productive, which is very valuable for an organization.”

Harkey first honed his skills in teamwork as a child, working alongside his brothers (one older and one twin) and parents.

“Most of my family members are handy people, whether it’s fixing things around the house or building things from scratch,” he said. “So, a lot of my childhood was spent outside, with power tools, working on something or another.”

His family also encouraged his love of music — after the left-handed middle schooler taught himself chords on his mother’s right-handed guitar, he received a left-handed acoustic guitar for Christmas.

“I retaught myself all the chords right side up,” Harkey said.

From there, he saved to buy his own Stratocaster electric guitar and has since built quite a collection.

“The more you get into music, the more you get into the gear and sound equipment that goes along with it,” he said. “I’ve spent way too much. I’m addicted. I love music — playing, listening, everything about it.”



Harkey keeps busy with a host of other hobbies, including rock climbing, cycling, camping, beer brewing and woodworking, most recently building a coffee table out of galvanized pipe and cedar wood with his father and brother.

“I guess I’m sort of left-brained and right-brained,” he said. “I have a very analytical mind, so even when I’m working on things that aren’t related to data, I plan out everything step-by-step, make all the measurements, purchase the best materials that are also the cheapest.”

And, in his day job at HP, Harkey is able to apply his creativity to do more than just present management with sets of numbers.

“It’s the creative thought that keeps things fresh and makes people stay excited and innovative,” he said. “Learning does not stop when you leave school, especially in data science. You have to keep up, and in doing so, you’re always learning.”



He added: “You have a toolbox of what I would call the industry standard, or the textbook way of solving things. These are correct, and they are a way to do things. But, if you become more creative in the way you solve a problem, you’ll find that what you think would have been the outcome of your model actually is not. To be creative and still have the mathematical view of how things work can be a challenge, but it also can be fun and valuable.”

Clayton Harkey has always been a team player, honing his skills working alongside his brothers fixing things around the house, or building things from the ground up.

Early in his career at Cameron, as a rotational trainee, Harkey established himself as willing to learn and grow, even if it meant taking on work that was far from glamorous.

“I made myself available to the predictive analytics architect when he asked if I could do some of the most tedious and annoying of work — data cleanup,” he said. “But in a very impactful way, we identified the highest return data cleansing effort by attacking the problem with machine learning, which allowed us to leverage publicly accessible subsidiary data to roll companies up to their parent operators. Ultimately, the project saved countless man hours across marketing, finance and credit, and over \$500,000 in expenses while sharing a proprietary ‘self-learning algorithm’ to the business. With that, I demonstrated a willingness to do the duller part of the job, but I learned so much about the area and created value at the same time, giving me a foot up stepping into a data scientist position.”

The skillsets that data scientists use are transferrable across industries, Harkey said.

“For students, I’d recommend exploring areas of statistics and machine learning, computer science and programming, and business and communication courses,” he added. “Ask yourself where your strengths and weaknesses are, and build up where you find you are weak. Go outside your comfort zone and focus on the areas you aren’t so sure about. For example, if you are a fantastic programmer and understand math, take a public speaking class, or if you are a great speaker, take a programming class. I’d recommend looking into Python and Java — Python is highly scalable and flexible, providing an abstract learning curve, whereas Java is the bedrock for some of the most bleeding-edge technologies, like Hadoop.”

Working professionals who aren’t in school but might be interested in transitioning to data science should take advantage of the wealth of information online on machine learning and programming, Harkey said, in addition to finding a mentor to guide them into the field.

“In your current organization, make yourself available to someone in a more technical domain, like IT, automation or engineering, and provide your time for any type of work for them,” he said.

On Another Note



FACULTY FOCUS

One of the most valuable parts of Clayton Harkey’s experience as a Bauer student was the Management Information Systems Student Organization (MISSO), which was founded more than 30 years ago by several faculty members, including Associate Professor Michael Parks, the organization’s current advisor.

“Dr. Parks was just a fantastic professor. He is the one who introduced me to the recruiters for my job. I told him where I wanted to work, and he said, ‘Are you sure?’ I said, ‘Yes, sir,’ and he said, ‘Follow me.’”

↓
THROUGH THE MEHTA FAMILY
FOUNDATION, RAHUL MEHTA
PROVIDES SCHOLARSHIP
SUPPORT FOR 10 INTERNATIONAL
BAUER COLLEGE STUDENTS EACH
YEAR, INVITING ALL RECIPIENTS
TO HIS HOME FOR AN
ANNUAL DINNER TO BETTER
GET TO KNOW THEM.



DEFINING SUCCESS

Scholarship Donor Reflects on Relationships, Faculty Influence

By Sarayu Sundar

Rahul Mehta is no stranger to success.

In the three decades since Mehta graduated with a computer science degree from the University of Houston, he has started and sold many technology companies. He ran his first company, Software Interfaces, for 10 years before it was eventually acquired in 1995. He then launched the Mehta Family Foundation with worldwide charitable efforts, including funding scholarships for Bauer College students.

But, when you ask Mehta about his definition of success, he won't mention any of those accomplishments.

"People define success in so many different ways," he explained. "In my mind, if you have to define success, it depends a lot on relationships." And, one of the markers of that definition of success, Mehta said, is his ongoing friendship with Bauer College professors, Ed Blair and Richard Scamell.

As a computer science major, Mehta made his way to the business school in order to complete the two required business electives at the time. Mehta took a management course with Bauer professor Skip Szilagyi in his first semester during the spring semester of 1980. He also took a class in database management with Scamell.

"I was blown away by Dr. Scamell," Mehta said. "What impressed me from day one about Dr. Scamell was how he had included his home phone number in the syllabus. Also impressive was his passion for his subject and desire to pass his knowledge to the next generation, which underscores his focus on the students."

That passion directly fueled Mehta's interest in databases. At the time, he was also working on campus at the computing center, a place that Mehta said "started my love for computers, and I never looked back."

In his work at the computing center, he recognized a recurring problem that needed a solution—students needed to connect database information from Oracle to the statistical analysis tool SAS. Mehta had an idea of building an interface that would help users work between the two systems, and he shared his plan with Scamell.

“

TO SEE THE STUDENTS BECOME SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE – THERE'S A LOT OF JOY IN THAT.

”

At the professor's suggestion, Mehta presented a paper on the topic at the first International Oracle Users' Conference. "Dr. Scamell helped me immensely," Mehta said. "We spent hours working on it, and Dr. Scamell would walk me through the outline and make me repeat it again and again."

The idea was enthusiastically received at the conference, and it was clear that Mehta had identified a critical business need. The idea

would eventually serve as the basis of Mehta's first company.

Along the way, Mehta said, his interactions with Scamell evolved from a teacher-student relationship to one simply of friendship. And, with the addition of Blair, the three formed a special bond over a shared love of baseball and UH.

Mehta credits Blair with the idea of the scholarship that his foundation provides to 10 Bauer College international students each year. During a conversation about ways to help the university, Blair explained that international students still had limited scholarship options, just as had been the case when Mehta was a student at the university.

Of course, for Mehta, the scholarship was not just about providing money, but also mentorship. He invites all of the scholarship recipients to his home for an annual dinner in an effort to get to know them. He describes his approach to the scholarship as one inspired by Scamell's work with his students. "I know if I put in more effort with my international students, I will probably get more fruits out of it," Mehta said.

And, he certainly has. Over the nearly two decades that he has been offering the scholarship, Mehta has built remarkable relationships, and many former scholarship recipients continue to stay connected with him. One former scholarship recipient invited Mehta to travel with her to her home country of Bulgaria and several recipients have invited him to their weddings.

"To see the students become successful people," Mehta said, "there's a lot of joy in that."



West Virginia-born and Florida-raised, Randy Webb came to Houston in 1991 as president of Uncle Ben's Inc. By then, the Florida State University graduate had already made history at the Dial Corporation (where at 29 he became the youngest corporate officer on record) and served as vice president of sales for M&M/Mars.

Despite a sweet career that allowed him to travel the world selling M&Ms and introducing Uncle Ben's first microwavable rice pouch, Webb knew he wanted to teach.

So just as he decided to take early retirement from Uncle Ben's, he started his Executive MBA studies at Bauer College and was hired as an executive professor in the college's newly established Program for Excellence in Selling. This was 1999.

Today, as the program celebrates its 20th anniversary, Webb is executive director of the Stephen Stagner Sales Excellence Institute, which was renamed in late 2015 after a gift from the former Mattress Firm CEO, which he helped cultivate.

We recently spoke to Webb — who lives in Houston with Judy, his wife of 46 years, and enjoys teaching Sunday school and watching old Western flicks — about his fascinating career, his time at Bauer and his role in the recent gifts to the college, including a donation from Houston philanthropists Andy and Barbara Gessner, who created an endowment for the college's sales competition teams and a scholarship program for top students.

Q & A

Q: AFTER COLLEGE, DID YOU GO STRAIGHT TO DIAL?

A: Yes, I was recruited off the college campus. I had three offers. When I was going through school, I worked at a grocery store called Publix for about four years. I used to see these people coming in the store, talking to the store manager, stocking shelves. So I would stop and talk to them. I decided when I graduated I sure didn't want to get into the retail business. You had to work too hard. I started interviewing for companies to go into sales. Dial actually had the best training program, and I felt like had the most opportunity. Even though that was the least amount of money I was offered, it turned out to be a good decision.

Q: YOU SPENT 15 YEARS AT DIAL AND ENDED UP AS VICE PRESIDENT OF FIELD SALES. WHY DID YOU LEAVE?

A: I wanted to work for a global company. I had the opportunity to work for Mars, which is truly global.

"MY HEART'S WITH MY UNDERGRADUATE SALES STUDENTS. THEY KEEP ME YOUNG. THE EMBA STUDENTS KEEP ME CHALLENGED. YOU CAN'T BEAT THAT COMBINATION," SAYS BAUER EXECUTIVE PROFESSOR RANDY WEBB.



THE GIFT OF SALES

Sales Institute Executive Director Focuses on Relationship Building
By Wendell Brock

Q: AND FROM THERE, YOU HAD OTHER GOALS.

A: When I talked to Mars about taking the job, I said, "If I go up there and do a good job, will you give me a shot at running one of your companies?" And they said, "You got a deal." At that point, no one out of sales had ever been appointed a president of one of their companies. We did well at the candy business, so they lived up to their end of the bargain, and I went to Uncle Ben's as president.

Q: AFTER SUCH SUCCESS, WHY DID YOU PURSUE AN MBA?

A: I ended up taking early retirement, because of health reasons. I had always had a desire to teach. I always said I wanted to be in a position to be able to do that when I stopped my business career. And so the reason I went back and got my MBA was because I wanted to teach at that level, and I felt like to be credible I had to have the degree I was teaching. That was my motivation to go back to school.

Q: DO YOU THINK BAUER'S SALES PROGRAM WAS AHEAD OF THE CURVE NATIONALLY WHEN IT STARTED 20 YEARS AGO?

A: Yes, there really weren't a lot of sales programs. There are now a number of schools that have sales



IT IS ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS. IT'S NOT ANY DIFFERENT FROM SELLING SNICKERS OR M&Ms.



classes, but not as a major, minor or as a degree. We have marketing Ph.D. students who focus on selling. I think we are on the only university in the country that actually has a Ph.D. program focused on sales. And when those people graduate, they go to other universities either to enhance their program or start a new one, which is cool to see.

Q: HOW DID THE STAGNER GIFT COME ABOUT?

A: One of our former associate deans for development had a saying, "Involvement leads to investment." So we got Steve (Stagner) involved with our sales program. ... In a nutshell, the reason he invested was because of our students and the difference they have made in his company. He also wants to elevate sales as a profession. They have hired quite a few of our students, and they have done extremely well at Mattress Firm.

Q: AND WHAT ABOUT THE GESSNERS?

A: I had him (Andy Gessner) come in and speak to our sales classes. I wanted him to see the students. I wanted him to interact with students. We are grateful to Andy and Barbara, and we are are grateful to Steve. It helps us celebrate our sales program and provide opportunities for students they wouldn't have otherwise.

Semester Events



INSPIRING MINDS

THIS SPRING, BAUER COLLEGE WELCOMED UH HEAD FOOTBALL COACH TOM HERMAN FOR ITS INSPIRING MINDS SERIES. DEAN LATHA RAMCHAND INTERVIEWED HERMAN IN FRONT OF A PACKED AUDIENCE OF STUDENTS, ALUMNI AND THE HOUSTON COMMUNITY, WITH TOPICS RANGING FROM HIS MORNING ROUTINE AND FAVORITE BOOKS AND DOCUMENTARIES TO HOW HE LEADS THE TEAM AND HIS GOALS FOR THE COMING SEASON.



WOLFFEST 2016

BAUER COLLEGE ENTREPRENEURSHIP STUDENTS RAISED OVER \$205,000 FOR THE WOLFF CENTER FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP DURING WOLFFEST 2016, A THREE-DAY ON-CAMPUS EVENT THAT REQUIRED TEAMS TO LAUNCH POP-UP RESTAURANTS AND EXECUTE ALL ASPECTS OF RUNNING A STARTUP COMPANY.



BACKYARD FUN

THIS SPRING'S EXECUTIVE MBA BARBECUE TRANSFORMED THE UH CAMPUS INTO A CARNIVAL, COMPLETE WITH GAMES FOR STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES, INCLUDING BUBBLEBALL SOCCER.





LEADERSHIP LESSON

DEAN LATHA RAMCHAND AND
UH HEAD FOOTBALL COACH TOM
HERMAN DISCUSSED TEAM
BUILDING, LEADERSHIP AND
WORK-LIFE BALANCE AT APRIL'S
INSPIRING MINDS EVENT.



Semester Events



SPRING BUSINESS CAREER FAIR

MORE THAN 100 RECRUITERS FROM LEADING COMPANIES CAME TO CAMPUS THIS SPRING TO MEET WITH BAUER COLLEGE STUDENTS ABOUT INTERNSHIP AND JOB OPPORTUNITIES.



EMBA BARBECUE

EXECUTIVE MBA STUDENTS AND ALUMNI BROUGHT THEIR FAMILIES TO CAMPUS FOR THE PROGRAM'S ANNUAL BARBECUE THIS SPRING, WHICH FEATURED CARNIVAL RIDES AND GAMES, MUSIC, FACE PAINTING AND BUBBLEBALL SOCCER.



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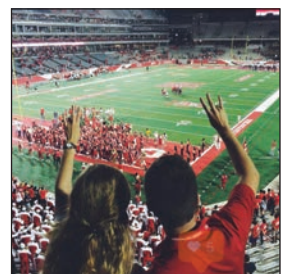
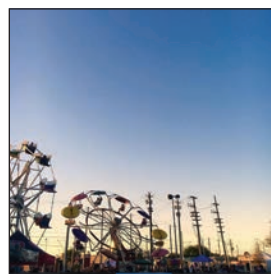
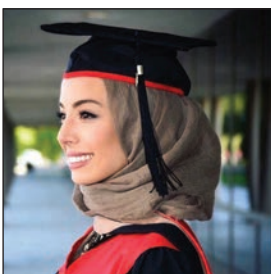
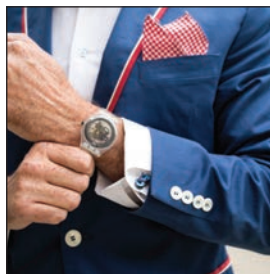
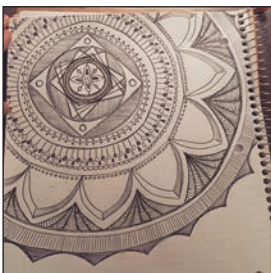
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