

In their Own Words: Doctoral Student Experience

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Doctoral Alumni Codou Samba on her experience as a doctoral student at Bauer

Bauer is definitely where awesome has happened for me! As I participated in the Spring 2016 Bauer Convocation ceremony, I was overcome by the undeniable truth of this simple, but powerful statement. I chose the Bauer College to pursue my Ph.D. because I firmly believed that the Management Ph.D. program would provide me with a solid training in conceptual thinking and methods of research. I was confident that Bauer would prepare me well for a career in academia... and it has!

Throughout my time at Bauer, I have learned from high caliber faculty. I highly value the guidance and support that my advisor, [Dr. Dusya Vera](#), has provided me with. She has been a great leader, mentor, advocate and friend for me, as well as for many in the doctoral program. [Dr. Steve Werner](#) and [Dr. Jim Hess](#) provided me with strong research method competencies. [Dr. Chet Miller](#) instilled in me the pursuit for high-quality theory and scholarship. [Dr. Vanessa Patrick](#) inspired me to aim high in my job search and pursue my dream of joining a Tier-1 institution. [Dr. Dale Rude](#) and Dr. Skip Szilagyi guided me in my teaching and the practical sides of my research. Every faculty member in the Department of Management has helped in one way or another during my journey as a doctoral student.

I am excited about the multiple projects and research partnerships that were born at Bauer and that I continue to pursue. I have collaborated (and continue to do so) on projects with half a dozen former or current Bauer Management faculty members. Moreover, I am grateful for the financial support offered by the Bauer Doctoral Program and the Department of Management. Indeed, several management faculty members together financed a large chunk of my dissertation data collection out of their research funds. I also received the Robert and Ruth Kneebone Scholarship (a \$2,000 scholarship), which helped fund my participation in the 2015 Academy of Management conference, where I interviewed with several universities and met my current Department Chair. Finally, Bauer's Department of Management provided me with funding for several national conferences throughout the years, which allowed me to network with and meet many noted scholars in the strategic management field.

My time at Bauer was certainly life-changing. The most meaningful events, in the midst of my doctoral studies were the birth of my two children. I am grateful for the Department of Management's family-friendly environment, which was supportive and simultaneously challenged me to stretch myself to new limits of my abilities. As a result, I was able to complete the Ph.D. program while at

the same time raising two young children. Importantly, when my oldest child was diagnosed with autism two years ago, Dusya guided me through the process of setting up the necessary support system for him. As I begin my career as a faculty member at the University of Tennessee, I aspire to put into practice Dusya's advising strategy: consistently being firm and compassionate at the same time; a very difficult balance to strike. I am fortunate to have my role model just a phone call away.

Codou Samba graduated in 2016 and is an Assistant Professor at University of Tennessee at Knoxville.