



Boston University School of Hospitality Administration

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Boston University School of Hospitality Administration
Winter 2015

*Warm greetings
from alumni
around the world*

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MELISSA OSTROW; ASHLEY ARONE; JENNA BASCOM

POSTCARDS FROM THE CUTTING EDGE

Alums sent us their picks for the 5 hottest global trends, from eco-friendly amenities to metasearch marketing. Hospitality is changing. How will you keep up?



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From the Dean



Dear SHA Family,

In an industry where “think globally” is a given, we need keen cultural intelligence to succeed. That’s why exposure to a variety of cultures is a critical part of the SHA education. SHA is one of the only hospitality programs in the United States that requires all students to have an international experience prior to graduating. More than 25 percent of our students hail from other countries, our faculty have worked for global companies, our advisory board members operate international hospitality companies—and our alumni work in leadership positions throughout the world.

In this issue of *Check In*, we celebrate SHA’s global reach with stories about an alum who

leads sales associates in 80 countries, a student who interned at the illustrious Ritz London, an alum who created a global mural, and faculty members who are conducting research with an international scope. To develop the cover story, we invited you to send postcards illuminating the trends you’re seeing from the vantage point of your leadership positions. You wrote to us from the United Arab Emirates, Hong Kong, Sweden, Myanmar (Burma), Germany, and Japan to share your tips for staying on the cutting edge of our rapidly changing industry. SHA faculty members also shared their expertise to help compile the list of five hottest hospitality trends.

We continue to prepare SHA students for global leadership careers here at 928 Commonwealth Avenue with study abroad programs in 75 countries and courses like Tourism and Hospitality Industries in China. To expand our international programming further still, we have added a course with a trip to Greece and established a 10-week summer internship program at a Taj Group hotel in India. Within the next year, we plan to launch a similar internship program in Dubai. As a result of this international instruction—and with support from SHA’s new Marriott Career Center—our students are prepared to enter the global industry of hospitality upon graduation.

From the moment you graduated, we have followed your careers with pride—while continually developing resources to foster your pride in SHA. Within the next year, we will reinvigorate the annual alumni events in Boston, Chicago, and New York, and we welcome your support in planning gatherings in cities around the globe. SHA’s success depends in part on a strong connection with our alumni; we look forward to seeing much more of you this year.

Best wishes,

Arun Upneja

Check In is published by Boston University School of Hospitality Administration for alumni and friends.

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WALL OF THE WORLD

How the SHA stairwell became a work of art

Elizabeth Pettinicchi ('14) turned a blank wall into a canvas. In Fall 2013, she was enrolled in a site-specific design class at BU’s College of Fine Arts and SHA Associate Professor of the Practice Michael Oshins’s hospitality leadership class. “Professor Oshins wanted us to figure out what inspires a leader, how a leader learns from others, and how we can grow through this reflection,” says Pettinicchi. Galvanized by the “overlapping theme of inspiration” in the two classes, Pettinicchi came up with the idea for this global hospitality mural, now displayed in the stairwell of the SHA building. She commissioned her fellow seniors to contribute inspirational quotes, and “since SHA has a lot of international students, I used global monuments and languages to tie into the culture of the School. My goal is for students to discuss their inspirations, find connections, and positively influence the SHA student body.” —LARA EHRLICH

MELISSA OSTROW; ASHLEY ARONE; JENNA BASCOM

DAN AGUIRRE

Research Spotlight

How SHA professors are improving hospitality in places as diverse as American hospitals and Hungarian restaurants

An overnight stay in the hospital can come with a price tag that would make even owners of five-star hotels blush. With patients paying more—and expecting more—health care providers have turned to the hospitality industry for help in cultivating pleasant hospital atmospheres. Assistant Professor Courtney Raesinafchi is studying the impact of a warm welcome on patient wellbeing. A former hotel designer, Raesinafchi hopes to “quantify the effect of atmospheric, design, and social factors on patient internal responses and satisfaction domains, which, in turn, influence their revisit intentions and willingness to recommend to others and pay out-of-pocket expenses.”

Forget the thick, gloppy goulash of yesteryear, says *Lonely Planet* of dining in the Hungarian capital, Budapest. “Stodgy main dishes have been brought up to date and jocularly christened *kortárs magyar konyha* (modern Hungarian cuisine).” Associate Professor of the Practice Peter Szende is exploring this changing



Associate Professor of the Practice Peter Szende explores the gastronomy of Budapest.

gastronomic world by studying “the determinants of trust in restaurant purchase decision” in the central European nation. At a time when the country’s dining market is becoming more competitive—but consumers’ spending power is crunched by a struggling economy—he plans to survey restaurant customers to investigate the “underlying consumer values that influence restaurant pre-purchase decisions and guest satisfaction.”

Hospitality is all about offering a generous welcome, but it can be hard to muster a smile when a guest is rude. Assistant Professor Erinn Tucker has studied the impact of negative

customer interactions on hospitality staff—and the best tactics for preparing mentally for inhospitable guests. She found that emotional regulation training effectively improved “behavior and emotional management” among the more than 200 employees in her study. Tucker says such training could help workers to be “more productive, and may reduce stress, cognitive dissonance, and turnover.”

Your hotel chain is getting bigger. And bigger. You face a choice: keep growing domestically, expand internationally, or stick with what you’ve got. According to research by Dean Arun Upneja, it might be better to make the leap overseas—and know your limits at home. “As firms grow in size, there is a negative impact on their performance domestically,” says Upneja, “but as they grow abroad, there is a positive impact on their performance. You have to be very selective in your pursuit of growth domestically—there might be richer profits to be had if you grow internationally.”

—ANDREW THURSTON

Welcome Aboard!

We are pleased to welcome the following to SHA

Adjunct Faculty Members

Theresa Doherty, director of market strategy at Marriott International

Jill McFadden, regional director of revenue management—north at Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc.

Nancy Medoff (CGS’89, SHA’92), senior director of global sales at Marriott International

Judith Ziemnik, events manager at the Epilepsy Foundation of New England

Nick Schiarrizzi, educator and consultant to the food service industry

Advisory Board

Jerry Noonan, global consumer practice leader at Spencer Stuart

Joy Rothschild, chief human resources officer at Omni Hotels & Resorts

Neil Shah, president and chief operating officer at Hersha Hospitality Trust

Customer Recognition— in 80 Countries

ALUM NANCY MEDOFF SHARES SECRETS FROM MARRIOTT’S TOP-PERFORMING GLOBAL SALES TEAM

BY JULIE RATTEY

IT’S MIDNIGHT WHEN YOUR FLIGHT LANDS.

You’re jet-lagged, grumpy, and desperate for a warm welcome. As you check into your hotel, the clerk hands you a letter. Your business is Marriott’s company of the month, which means you’re getting a perk. You might receive anything from free bottled water to a selection of local fruit to a discount for the hotel health club. Suddenly, your jet lag doesn’t seem so bad.

For business travelers employed by companies recognized as Marriott’s global accounts—many of which are Fortune 100 companies, which generate a combined total of \$3.9 billion in annual revenue for Marriott—hotels throughout the world may present these treats. Marriott partners with each participating company to choose when and how to appreciate its travelers, and Nancy Medoff (CGS’89, SHA’92) coleads the team that makes it happen. As senior director of global sales at Marriott International, she oversees about 100 associates who represent more than 80 countries and 230 accounts. Her team offers “more than just dates, rates, and space,” providing customized initiatives that help companies achieve their objectives, including keeping their employees. “The ultimate goal is for corporations to view us not just as lodging providers, but as true business partners,” she says.

The company of the month program is just one example of Marriott’s corporate collaborations. In 2014, Medoff co-created and launched a partnership with a national insurance company. When fire or other



“The ultimate goal is for corporations to view us not just as lodging providers, but as true business partners.”

As senior director of global sales at Marriott International, Nancy Medoff oversees about 100 associates who represent more than 80 countries, including (clockwise from top left) India, Thailand, and China.

disasters displace policy holders and their families, the insurance company presents them with several hotels they can make their temporary home. If they select Marriott, the hotel staff presents them with a welcome package containing laundry detergent, snacks, toys, and other comforts on behalf of both companies.

Medoff’s global team is critical for mobilizing such projects. Take the example of the company of the month, she says. If the selected company uses 1,200 of Marriott’s hotels, her team must coordinate with staff in every hotel to make the initiative run smoothly; regular conference calls are essential to organize these projects, as well as to discuss trends, challenges, and the perks customers would value in various markets.

The key to securing top sales performance from an already ambitious team is to treat them with the same care and respect Marriott gives its customers, says Medoff. Marriott’s leaders have always believed that if the com-

pany takes care of its employees, the employees will take care of customers, who will return to Marriott, she explains. Treating her team well includes creating a “no-blush zone” in which employees feel comfortable sharing ideas, taking calculated risks, and learning from mistakes. It’s an atmosphere Medoff replicates at SHA, where she teaches hospitality strategic marketing as an adjunct professor. “My students know it’s better to make the big mistakes here in this safe place and then take the learnings with them when they go out in the real world,” she says.

The time Medoff invests in her team is paying off. For the past two years, her Marriott associates rated their work environment 100 percent in teamwork and personal growth through an anonymous company survey. Medoff couldn’t be more pleased.

“I know I’m doing my job when my people have success and feel good about trying something different because of our collaboration as a team.”

GOING GREEN FOR GOLD

In 2014, SHA became the first school at Boston University to achieve green certification from sustainability@BU. The certification program uses a points system to audit the School’s daily efforts to conserve energy; reduce waste; and provide opportunities for its students, faculty, and staff to participate in the University-wide sustainability effort. SHA’s green initiatives, which helped earn it a gold-level certification, have included installing occupancy sensors to control lights, replacing disposable mugs with reusable ones, and turning off equipment after use.—LE



COURTESY OF NANCY MEDOFF

Postcards from the cutting edge



One alum challenges travelers to build boats on the Arabian Sea. Another brings the taste of Africa to a tapas lounge in Burma. And one alum in Sweden helps to preserve the rain-forest in Malaysia. Industry experts sent us their tips for keeping pace with the 5 hottest global trends in hospitality.

BY LARA EHRLICH

IN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS AROUND THE WORLD, ALUMS ARE EMPLOYING THE SKILLS THEY ACQUIRED AT SHA TO INNOVATE AND EXCEL IN AN EVER-CHANGING GLOBAL INDUSTRY. More than 25 percent of the School's students are international, so freshmen "get a flavor of other countries' cultures from their very first day," says Dean Arun Upneja, while "international students come to understand American cultures and customs from their US counterparts."

SHA's international faculty builds upon this global foundation with courses like Culture and Communications Travel Series: Hospitality in Ancient to Modern Greece, Tourism and Hospitality Industries in China, and Destination Marketing. The Dean's Advisory Board, comprised of executives around the world, imparts wisdom to SHA students in the dean's Distinguished Lecture Series, and starting in 2015, a new exchange partnership with the Taj Group will expand the School's reach.

The SHA education extends beyond the classroom; as the only hospitality program that requires every student to study abroad, the School produces industry professionals equipped with the skills and knowledge to become global trendsetters in their own right. Here, seven alums based around the world weigh in on the hottest hospitality trends and share their strategies for keeping ahead of the curve.



A NEW AGE FOR TRAVEL

Millennials are the new customers in town, and they're a force to be reckoned with. This group—ages 16 to 34—now outnumbers baby boomers; according to the United Nations, they comprise 20 percent of all international travelers and yield more than \$180 billion in annual tourism revenue. As this generation comes into its own as the fastest growing segment for travel spending, industry professionals are studying what millennials want and how they want it. Baby boomers generally look for luxury and adventure infused with the comforts of home, but millennials have different priorities. They travel more broadly for work and pleasure, often booking nontraditional accommodations, such as apartments listed on sites like airbnb.com. When they stay in hotels, "they're looking for a quick and efficient experience," says James Fynes ('07), director of group sales for the Fairmont The Palm in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates. "Speed—without sacrificing quality—is a key measuring tool of their guest experience." And as millennials like Fynes enter the hospitality workforce, they are shaping the industry for their generation. ▶▶

► Beyond speed and efficiency, Fynes says his generation is looking for an elusive “wow” factor, which companies strive to provide through innovative offerings and events. To draw millennial business travelers to the Fairmont’s newly opened property on the Palm Jumeirah Island—the world’s largest man-made island in the shape of a palm tree—Fynes develops “exotic dining and alternative approaches to team-building activities.” One of his most successful activities is the Iron Chef Experience, which pits guests against one another to determine who can produce the best three-course meal. For another popular event, Build-Your-Own Vessel, Fynes supplies guests with kits to build their own boat, which they then test on the Arabian Sea. “It is a fun activity that allows team members to bond in a unique way,” Fynes says. For millennials, “the days of sitting at round tables and working on lackluster projects are over.”

It’s important not just to understand what this generation wants in a hotel or dining experience, but how they make their selections, Fynes says. “Millennials love the ability to promote and share their experiences around the globe. Companies must embrace this trend and approach guests through marketing methods like Facebook, Twitter, blogs, and review sites.”



TWO-WAY ASIA BOOM

As Western hotel companies are rapidly expanding into Eastern countries, Asian travelers are spreading their wings. In 2015, more than 100 million Chinese alone are expected to travel to Paris, New York, London, Las Vegas, Orlando, Hawaii, and other top tourist destinations. Thanks to a growing economy and expanding middle class, Asia has become a major player in the travel and tourism industry. To keep up with the influx of travelers and compete for this expanding travel segment, hospitality professionals around the globe are finding new ways to welcome Asian guests. In the winter 2014 issue of *Check In*, SHA experts shared their tips, like offering international newspapers and TV channels, training staff in languages and cultural sensitivity, and developing relationships with China’s National Tourism Administration and with local and provincial governments.

Rene Leung (’03), head of marketing for Grandtag Financial Group in Hong Kong, notes that the boom goes both ways. Just as Western countries are becoming popular destinations for Asian travelers, Asia is experiencing a spike as a destination for international travelers—and other Asians. “Among the most popular destinations for Asian travellers are other Asian countries,” according to *BBC News*. In 2013 China was the fourth most popular tourist spot in the world, behind France, the US, and Spain, and North East Asia is projected to become

the world’s most visited destination by 2030. Like their Western counterparts, Asian hospitality professionals are striving to keep pace with the influx of visitors, with a major focus on development. “Domestically, it seems like there is a new hotel opening up every minute” in China, Leung says, and in the next 10 years, more than 350 new airports will spring up in the Asia-Pacific region to accommodate the travel demand. “Asia is where the future lies.”

As managing director at The Lab wine and tapas bar in Yangon, Myanmar (Burma), Amine Zlaoui (’11) is witnessing this rapid growth first-hand. The number of tourists and expats flooding into Myanmar is rising exponentially, he says, and The Asia Development Bank expects the number of tourists to rise from 2.2 million in 2015 to 5 million by 2020. To welcome guests from all over the world, The Lab offers an international dining experience with “a gastronomic tour of Spain, Greece, France, North Africa, Asia, and the Middle East,” according to the restaurant’s Facebook page. Zlaoui hosts events like African Night to give guests a taste of the exotic and keep them coming back for new experiences. He has to be “constantly innovative,” he says, “because as a small-scale restaurant, we have to compete with the big money players coming in.”



ECO-FRIENDLY AMENITY

From washing linens to serving meals, lighting bedrooms to furnishing lobbies, the hospitality industry “affects the environment and local communities along the entire value chain,” says Hillary Meyer (’12), revenue manager, Clarion Brand, Nordic Choice Hotels in Stockholm, Sweden. And as global concerns about climate change, environmental degradation, and overconsumption rise, hospitality companies are making some big changes to reduce their carbon footprints.

Hospitality organizations throughout the world—including SHA—are pursuing Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) certifications to ensure their buildings are energy- and water-efficient. As director of housekeeping at Rosewood in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, Casey Parmelee (’08) has implemented sustainable practices like partnering with Nespresso to recycle coffee capsules, changing linens every other day, and encouraging guests to reuse towels. Modifications like these are an effective start, Parmelee says, but “as people continue to become more sensitive to the impact we have on the Earth’s resources, the expectation for hotels to minimize their footprint will increase. Having a basic LEED certification and changing bed linens every other day will not be enough.” Companies will begin targeting silver, gold, and platinum LEED tiers that demand more aggressive changes, like switching to solar and water power to generate electricity.

Driven by a responsibility to have an impact beyond their brick-and-mortar properties, hospitality companies are also developing eco-friendly programs and giving back to communities in need. Meyer highlights Nordic Choice’s rainforest preservation effort as just one of her company’s many outreach initiatives. The hotels have stopped using palm oil, a common ingredient in foods like margarine and bread, as well as in items like shampoos, candles, and detergents. “Clearing land for oil palm plantations has led to widespread deforestation that has pushed many species to the brink of extinction and threatens the biodiversity of these habitats,” Meyer explains. “Globally, the destruction of tropical forests is a major contributor to climate change, as felled and burned trees release methane and other greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.” For every guest who stays at a Nordic Choice Hotel, the company pays to preserve 100 square meters of rainforest; in one year alone, Nordic preserved 618,269,080 square meters—or 86,592 football fields—of rainforest.



ASSET-LIGHT IS QUITE ALRIGHT

Financing is the most expensive component of hotel development. To lower the risk for developers, hotel management companies are going “asset-light,” or managing hotels under the company brand, while franchising the physical building to an individual operator or an investment fund. Like many other brands that have transferred their flags to independent owners, InterContinental Hotels Group owns and leases only 9 of its 4,697 hotels, manages 711 properties, and franchises 3,977, according to its website. “The asset-light business model is attractive as it reduces fixed costs like land and FF&E [furniture, fixtures & equipment] and requires no investment, which reduces the risk and leaves the company’s capital open for other investments,” says Meyer. “The change must be a companywide decision to invest more in people and brand development, rather than real estate.”

Recent graduates like Meyer experience the impact of this trend in their day-to-day jobs. Before asset-light financing became the standard, hospitality professionals reported to a single general manager; now, the asset-light model has added multiple levels to the reporting structure. A general manager oversees the hotel operations, an asset manager ensures the owner earns a return on the investment, and a franchiser confirms the property adheres to brand standards. “Our gradu-

ates have to report to many different masters in many different ways, each one with their own interests,” says Upneja, whose research focuses on the effect of internationalization and firm size on publicly traded US hotels. “We make sure that our graduates are well equipped to deal with these overlapping and multiple stakeholders” by emphasizing communication strategies and entrepreneurship in SHA courses.



GOING SOCIAL

Companies can no longer control their image through staged photos, curated websites, and targeted commercials. These days, reputation is crowd-sourced, compiled from consumer feedback on social sites like Facebook and Twitter, while consumers use metasearch sites like Expedia, TripAdvisor, Orbitz, and Booking.com to search thousands of hotels and restaurants with just one click. Consumers not only browse rooms, rates, and discounts on these sites, they share the positives and negatives of their experiences, says Satomi Arai (’08), a senior account manager for Booking.com, based in Tokyo, Japan.

“I think it’s to our benefit as hospitality professionals to understand the demand for unbiased, authentic, and insightful information, which will only increase among customers in the coming years,” Arai says. “With that said, we should not only understand the various tools, but also strive even harder to provide an amazing hospitality experience. Now more than ever, there is a greater accountability and visibility for the service we provide—or fall short of providing.” She notes that before social media, a consumer would tell a friend or family member about

the service they experienced, whereas now a guest shares their experiences with “their 300-plus Facebook friends and the thousands of strangers who will stumble upon their reviews in the future.”

While some companies might find this trend threatening because it implies a loss of corporate control, Jill Eelman (’12), who works in hotel relations at the search site trivago.com, is quick to point out that companies can use social media to their advantage. “In order to meet this trend’s demands in the next five years, it’s important for hospitality professionals to view metasearch as a marketing channel and not just another online travel agency or distribution channel,” says Eelman, who is based in Cologne, Germany. “Metasearch engines give hoteliers the opportunity to protect their brand by internally controlling their content. By fully optimizing their profiles on sites like trivago.com, hoteliers can drive more direct bookings through their property websites.”

POSTCARDS FROM THE CUTTING EDGE

To compile this list, we invited you to send us postcards about the hottest trends you’re seeing around the world. You shared your tips for keeping up.

Please join the fun: Send a postcard to SHA, and we’ll share it via Facebook and on the SHA website, bu.edu/hospitality.

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Transatlantic Style

WHAT IT TAKES TO WORK IN A FAMOUS FIVE-STAR HOTEL

BY ANDREW THURSTON

NO BEARDS ALLOWED. The illustrious Ritz London overflows with opulence—and rules. If the hirsute want to work at the 108-year-old hotel, says Thomas Andrews ('15), a former Ritz human resources intern, they'll have to shave first. The regulations aren't just for the staff: guests must stick to a formal dress code for lunch and dinner (jeans are allowed at breakfast, though sneakers are most certainly not). On the plus side, if you spend \$5,000 per night on a signature suite for your stay in the UK's capital, you'll get a butler and a ride to the airport in a Rolls-Royce.

"I wear a beard myself," says Andrews, "My beard's part of my identity. It was a little difficult grabbing that razor and having to do it, but it was the Ritz standard to be clean shaven. With that being said, I think tradition makes the Ritz stand out from a lot of other properties, so it was something I had to get used to."

And, he adds, if you're in HR and "you expect other people to do it, you have to do it yourself."

Andrews spent three months at the self-proclaimed "world's greatest hotel" as part of SHA's mandatory international experience, which offers students the choice of programs in 75 countries. Today, he's working somewhere with the same commitment to luxury, but a markedly different history: a former prison. The Liberty Hotel—housed in Boston's former Charles Street Jail—boasts luxurious rooms, river views, and a swanky bar with booths in preserved cells. Andrews, who transferred to BU in his sophomore year to bring a business focus to his degree, spent the past summer as a services ambassador at the hotel; since the fall, he's been an HR intern.



From London's opulent Ritz to Boston's luxurious prison-turned-hotel, Thomas Andrews ('15) gained insight into upscale hospitality on both sides of the Atlantic.

"It's just eye-opening what a place can bring out of you, how that changes and shapes your personality for the rest of your life."

He says working on both sides of the Atlantic has given him a valuable insight into how America and the UK differ in their approaches to upscale hospitality.

"American hospitality is about exceeding expectations and creating relationships with guests. In Britain, guests were just like, 'I'm here for a service, I'm here to get my meal, and I just want it delivered correctly and politely.'"

He thinks Brits could use "a little bit more personal service" and notes that European travelers at the Liberty might find American intimacy awkward at first—wondering why a stranger wants to know about their day, for instance—but by the end of a stay, "they like it, they really engage in it."

Despite going to England because "it was a requirement," Andrews says the experience changed his life. "It's just eye-opening what a place can bring out of you, how that changes and shapes your personality for the rest of your life." He's already looking into visas that will allow him to spend another couple of years in London after graduation. Whether he stays for good or not, he speculates he'll stick with HR and top-end hospitality.

"You're always focusing on how you're motivating, training, or empowering employees to deliver this luxury-level service, and I think that takes a lot of morale and motivation. Employees have to be chipper and smiles and rainbows—and that takes a lot of work."

And, at the Ritz, a razor. ■

Rajesh Khubchandani

General Manager for The Ritz-Carlton, Tysons Corner



IN 2000, RAJESH KHUBCHANDANI HAD a successful job as manager for the Taj's Coral Reef resort in the Republic of the Maldives. But the India native was eager to hone his business skills in North America and explore the continent's hospitality industry. In 2001,

he moved to Toronto with his wife, two-year-old daughter, and their six bags of belongings—"without a job, without any credit, without knowing the market." Over the

next few years, Khubchandani worked in top positions in Toronto hotels and won Marriott International's 2004 North American Lodging Director of Event Management award. The experience taught him, "If you have an exit option, you're going to exercise it, whereas if you tell yourself you don't have one, you're going to apply yourself." Khubchandani believes "the only risk you take in life is not taking a risk," and that "the paralysis of not making decisions is sometimes far worse than the outcome of making the wrong decision." Being a little vulnerable is part of the process. "Be prepared to not know all the answers," he says, "and let time dictate a lot of the answers for you."

COURTESY OF RAJESH KHUBCHANDANI; DAVE ROSENBLUM; (C) 2014 HILTON WORLDWIDE

"The only risk you take in life is not taking a risk"

Rosamond Cosentino

Director & Chief Administrative Officer of Global Executive Services, Citigroup



THE BUDGET MEETINGS WERE PAINFUL: numbers weren't adding up, and vendors weren't being paid on time. Rosamond Cosentino's instincts told her she could fix the problem, but she was new to Citigroup as executive dining manager—and she'd never managed a budget. Nevertheless, Cosentino ('97) asked her boss if she could take over the budgeting responsibility, and succeeded in turning things around. "It not only helped

the meetings go more smoothly," she says, "but it created an entire new accountability system for the budget." This new system improved

processes connected to daily operations and vendor payments. From then on, "Every time I saw problems, I would just take the plunge to try to resolve them." Learning new skills as she needed them led to career advancement. To keep growing in a career, Cosentino recommends considering, "What would I do if there were no obstacles?" Trusting your instincts and asking, "How great could this project be?" she says, "helps you make the right decisions in how to communicate your idea and get the message across to the right people to make it happen."

"What would I do if there were no obstacles?"

Ian Carter

President of Global Development, Architecture, Construction, and Design for Hilton Worldwide; SHA Advisory Board Member



BEFORE JOINING HILTON, IAN CARTER HELD leadership positions at General Electric Plastics and Black & Decker. But switching industries isn't the biggest or most important career risk he's taken, he says; that was leaving his home country. Though "the safe thing to do after university was to work close to home," Carter wanted to see as much of the world as he could. He was about 25, he says, when he decided to leave the UK to work for GE in the Netherlands. He estimates he has now spent three-quarters of his career abroad. The life experience he's gained as a result helps Carter in his job planning global growth for Hilton, which has 4,000 hotels and over 1,000 more in the pipeline. Every professional needs to be prepared to take risks, says Carter; "I think it's just a case of business life today." Over the course of a career, "Things will change, and you'll be afforded opportunities you never thought of, and you'll also miss out on opportunities that you were hoping for." You can always decide not to take a chance, "but if you want a safe life," he says, "it's probably going to be a lot less exciting." ■

"If you want a safe life, it's probably going to be a lot less exciting"



Alexander Friedman ('06)

JOSEPH PEREZ ('92) of Dallas, Tex., was recently promoted to director of technology planning, reservations & distribution for Hilton Worldwide. He is pursuing a master's degree in hospitality administration with a minor in higher education and hopes to follow in the footsteps of his mentor, Professor Michael Oshins, with whom he studied hospitality technology as an undergraduate.



JAE CHO ('94) welcomed a daughter, Sarah Christine Cho, on July 4.

ALICIA CARUSO ('97) and her husband moved to Sydney, Australia, at the beginning of the year. They are working, traveling, and loving their new home. Caruso participated in two of SHA's Sydney Internship Program alumni/student events, which she thought were "great—especially since I went through the program myself while at BU." She welcomes other SHA alums living in Australia to get in touch.

LAUREN CARR ('02) of Huntington Beach, Calif., is director of sales & marketing for Las Ventanas al Paraiso, Rosewood Hotels & Resorts; prior to Rosewood,

she worked at Fairmont Hotels & Resorts. Carr has lived in California since November 2012 and is engaged to Jacob Morado of Huntington Beach. The wedding will take place in 2015.

ESTEE CHAIKIN ('02) has launched a full solar installation service with IKEA in the UK. She recently received the Business Green Young Sustainability Executive of the Year award, which she says is "a testament to BU's hospitality program for helping me understand how to create excellent service. I want to send my thanks to the professors who made me believe in creating new services from scratch." Chaikin is pregnant and due to give birth on New Year's Eve, which she says "will really kick off the next chapter." She hopes to visit Boston in 2015, "when I will have a little one by my side."

KATHRYN FINAMORE ('03) married Erik DeCecco on July 25, 2014, at the Hotel Lafayette in

Buffalo, NY. Fellow alums can email her at kfinamore@gmail.com.

SHIRLEY (CHAN) SMISEK ('03) married Robert Smisek on March 1, 2014, at St. Paul the Apostle in New York, NY.

ALEXANDER FRIEDMAN ('06) is co-founder of Ruckus Marketing, Ruckus Brewing Company, and the Brewers Hill Development Group. Founded in 2005, Ruckus Marketing, LLC, is a full-service agency that was recently named to the 2013 Fastest Growing Agencies in America List by the Agency 100. Ruckus has been featured in *Forbes*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *AdWeek*, among many other news outlets. Several articles, including pieces in *Forbes* and *Entrepreneur*, have featured Friedman's work and advice as an entrepreneur and leader in technology and marketing. Friedman and his partner's new project is the Brewers Hill Development Project in Allentown, Pa.



Estee Chaikin ('02)

LESLIE LEW ('06) of Portland, Ore., recently became senior corporate director of revenue management for Provenance Hotels, a hotel management and ownership group. In his new role, Lew is responsible for revenue management, distribution, and loyalty strategies for seven Provenance hotels in Portland, Seattle, Tacoma, and Nashville. Lew writes, "It's a great opportunity to join a growing company and get into hotel development and asset management."

ANDREW YANG ('07) of Beijing, China, is director of events for the Park Hyatt Beijing. He was disappointed to miss the last BU conference in the city but would "love to plug into any alumni events or gatherings here in Beijing."

JOSEPHINE WONG ('09) has switched careers, from hospital-ity to broadcast media, after joining Turner Broadcasting System, Inc. Wong's hospital-ity background serves her well



TALIA WAELSCH ('10) (far left) of Sydney, Australia, works with Zabrero, a quick-service restaurant franchise that sells healthy Mexican food to support humanitarian projects in Africa, Asia, and the Americas. Since the company opened in 2005, Zabrero has provided millions of meals to people living in poverty around the world through its Plate 4 Plate initiative. The company will expand to the US in summer 2015, starting with Boston.

"Working here for the past two years has been so inspiring and fulfilling," Waelsch writes. "It is surreal to be surrounded by such intelligent colleagues who are also so young and motivated. I am very excited to introduce Zabrero to America!"

Join the Zabrero expansion. Waelsch is looking for fellow SHA alums to get involved and welcomes emails at Talia@zabrero.com.



Shirley (Chan) Smisek ('03)

at Turner, as the division that she supports strives for the highest standard of client service. In addition to her professional career, she is pursuing an MBA at Emory University. When she lived in Boston, Wong represented SHA at numerous events and spoke at Professor Peter Szende's HR class and Professor Zoe Ho's Tourism and Hospitality Industries in China class. Now that Wong lives in Atlanta, she says, "Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if there is anything I can do from afar."

CHARLES KING (CGS'08, SHA'10) works with Terrier Residential in Boston doing residential sales.

SOPHIE CHARRON ('11) was a front desk manager with Marriott for two years and recently moved back to Boston, where she is now an events specialist in BU's events & conferences department. She writes, "I love being back on campus! I currently live in Fenway so the commute is pretty nice, too."

BLAKE TRIPLETT ('11) was promoted to director of revenue management at The Tremont Chicago Hotel with Starwood Hotels in April 2014. Prior to working at The

Tremont, Triplett was revenue manager at W hotels of Chicago, Ill.

AIMEE CAPLEN ('13) has just completed one year with Hyatt Hotels as an assistant front office manager at the Hyatt Regency Orange County in Garden Grove, Calif., "making every family's dreams come true—we are right next to Disneyland." ❏



Aimee Caplen ('13)

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