

# OBSERVER

THE MAGAZINE OF BENTLEY COLLEGE

WINTER 2003



Framing the  
Business University

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Over the past five years, I've been writing to you about pursuing the "next level" of academic excellence for Bentley. It has been a remarkable period for the college. By any measure — the schools we now compete with for top students, the faculty we recruit, selectivity in admissions, our reputation with employers, the job offers our graduates are getting even in a downturn and, of course, the rankings Bentley has earned from *US News* and others — we have attained our initial goals. Now it is time to turn our energies toward defining and pursuing the *next* next level.

Bentley has truly begun to emerge as the nation's first business university. As you may have heard me say, our goal is to do for students interested in business and related professions what the nation's technological universities do for students interested in science and engineering. In many ways, we are already there: For students preparing for business careers, we combine the student orientation, broad education and rich campus life of a small college, with the sophisticated curricula, academic facilities and technological power of a major university.



*Joseph A. Marano*

The next, next level is about building a capability and reputation for research that complements these strengths. Our goal is to establish a tradition of practical research, focused on the world of business practice, conducted in close partnership with the many firms around us, and leading to the kinds of interactions and new knowledge that reinforce and even extend our tradition of teaching excellence.

The critical first step in this endeavor was recruiting a new academic leadership team. In this issue you'll meet Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Bob Galliers, Dean of Business and the McCallum Graduate School Margi Olson, and Dean of Arts and Sciences Kate Davy. Under their leadership, the faculty is engaged in several important initiatives that will further develop the unique nature of Bentley College. Together, faculty in business and the arts and sciences will outline an agenda for research targeted at the intersections of business and IT, and business and the arts and sciences; explore launching a PhD program and other strategies to strengthen our research capability; define and implement a distinctive role for the arts and sciences in a business university context; and consider ways to expand on our programs in ethics and social responsibility as well as interrelated efforts in international studies.

You'll be hearing a good deal more about our plans in the months and years to come. As we continue the capital campaign, which is a vital part of pursuing the next, next level for Bentley College, I'll be meeting with alumni all over the country (and the world, for that matter). I look forward to talking with you in person about our work to shape the country's first business university.

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## CLASS BOOK PROMPTS SPIRITED DISCUSSION

### As ruling monarchs go,

Belgium's King Leopold II was no prince. His 44-year reign was a hot topic across campus this fall, through Bentley's first-ever class book program.

*King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror and Heroism in Colonial Africa*, by Adam Hochschild, was required reading for all first-year students. The book chronicles the plunder of natural resources and genocide of native peoples, under Leopold, at the turn of the 20th century in what is now the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

"The intent was to create an intellectual conversation across courses and departments about a book," says Professor of Management Duncan Spelman, who served on the 12-member faculty committee that organized the project. *King Leopold's Ghost* was chosen in part for the many disciplines it touches on: African history, colonialism, politics, economics, psychology and business, to name a few.

**"THE BOOK RAISES MANY ISSUES ABOUT HUMAN BEHAVIOR, ESPECIALLY IN THE CONTEXT OF BUSINESS."**

Over the summer, members of the Class of 2006 received a copy of the book and an assignment: Craft five questions that would be intriguing to discuss with fellow students and faculty members. Spelman calls the questions generated "thoughtful and provocative, demonstrating they had read the book very carefully."

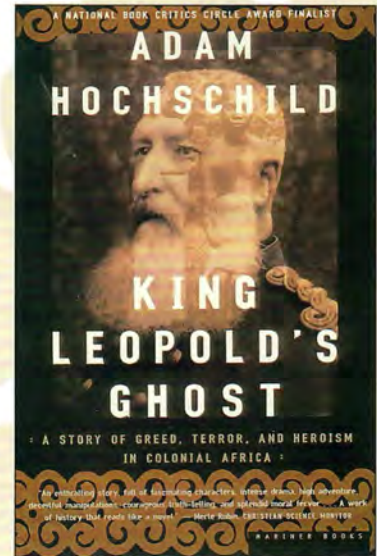
Why weren't the Force Publique put on trial for war crimes like the Nazis were? How did Leopold and [Henry] Stanley use modern marketing techniques to manipulate the truth? Is power always corrupting? These and other queries fueled discussion in First-Year Seminar classes.

Anecdotal reports from those first classes were positive. "For the most part, students enjoyed the book," says Gerry Stenerson, assistant dean for first-year programs. "They seem to have taken the reading assignment seriously and are eager to talk about it."

Conversations continued all fall. The book was used to illustrate relevant concepts and themes in more than 50 sections of different undergraduate courses: American Government; Religions, Cultures and Societies; Selected Topics in Management; Legal Environment of Business; Issues and Investigations in Psychology — even Honors Calculus.

"The book raises and discusses many fascinating issues about human behavior, especially in the context of business," notes Spelman, who tapped *King Leopold* for his Managing Teams course.

The issues raised in Hochschild's book received a further airing in a



semester-long series of events. These included panel discussions with Bentley faculty and special guests from the Democratic Republic of the Congo; a series of films such as "Apocalypse Now," "Heart of Darkness" and "Sankofa"; a poetry reading; and an exhibit of Congo-related materials at the Baker Library. There was also an essay contest for first-year students and a class book web site with late-breaking news, background information, suggestions for additional readings, and more.

A highlight of the program was author Hochschild's trip to Bentley on October 2 and 3. Along with visiting classes to discuss the book, he joined in a panel discussion about the impact of globalization on local cultures in developing countries.

◆ — SS

## LAYING A NEW CANVAS

While many of their classmates are wrestling with balance sheets and business plans, 20 Bentley students sit in a small art studio learning to draw the “negative space” around a nude female model. Artist and sculptor Jim Morris teaches the brand-new Making Drawings course.

“Drawing nurtures students’ creative energy and gives them new ways of seeing a problem,” says Morris, who also serves as coordinator of arts and lectures for Bentley. “When you use both the left and right brain, you connect ideas in a way you never could before.”

Making Drawing is one of several new courses offered as part of a growing creative arts initiative on campus. In a curriculum best known for business and technology, students now find World of Jazz, Going to Symphony, Art of Photography, and Latin Dance and Culture.

### Crafting a wish-list

English Department chairman Bruce Herzberg heads a committee that has worked since spring 2001 to increase the number and variety of creative arts courses and programs at Bentley.

The group of 16 faculty and staff started by crafting a wish-list — new courses in music, drawing and more — then reached out to the arts world. Special Assistant to the President Earl Avery recruited 60-year-old saxophonist Robin Kenyatta, whose 11 jazz albums span four decades, to teach the three-credit World of Jazz course.

Classical music aficionado Michael Frank, an associate professor in the English Department, jumped at the chance to teach Going to Symphony. His students learn an appreciation for all aspects of the medium: the composers, the performers, the sound of the instruments, the culture of attending.

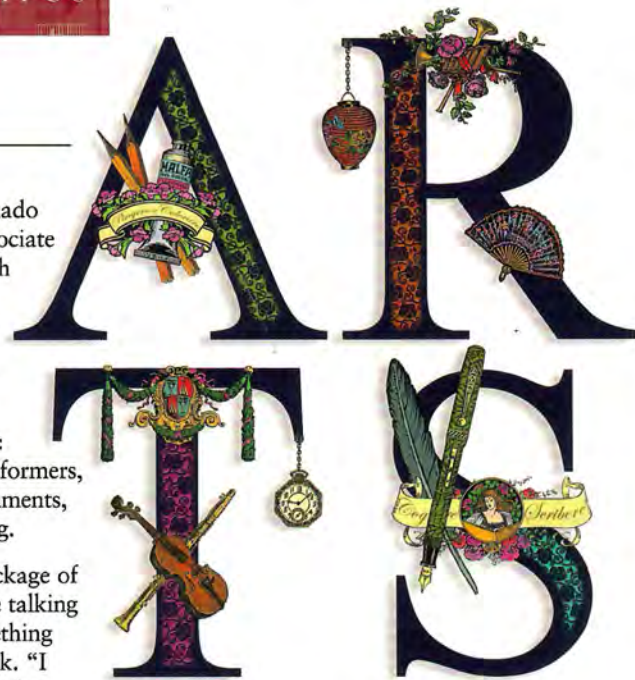
“I hope this whole package of courses will get people talking about the arts as something interesting,” says Frank. “I want students to think that ballet is cool, that medieval literature is cool.”

Other short-range plans call for new courses in music and the visual arts, such as painting and electronic art. Boosting the number of arts events on campus is another goal; already the college offers a range of plays, concerts, literary readings, and gallery exhibits each semester, many through the Bowles Performing Arts Series and Creative Writing Series. Down the road, the committee wants to purchase equipment — a ceramic kiln, cameras — and gain dedicated classroom space.

Funds raised through the Campaign for Bentley are providing support for the arts programs. Trustee Mark Skaletsky '70 was among the first to sign on, with a \$250,000 pledge in spring 2002. This past summer, the Skaletsky Performing Arts Fund helped underwrite the creation of an art studio in Lindsay Hall.

### DID YOU KNOW?

About 20 students from Bahrain are the first to join a four-year pilot program sponsored with the Bahrain Institute for Banking and Finance (BIBF). Taking courses at BIBF in Juffair and during two summers here, students will earn a Bentley BS in management.



Herzberg predicts that funding opportunities for the arts will be a draw for alumni. “Some may have wanted more arts while they were at Bentley,” he says. “Or perhaps they realize this will give them more well-rounded students to hire.”

In recruitment terms, the arts are a welcome selling point. As Herzberg puts it: “Now we can tell kids who are looking at Georgetown that Bentley gives them the arts, too.”

— JAS

## L'OREAL COMPETITION IS 'WORTH IT'

**Product launches.** Supply-chain management. Pricing strategy. MBA student teams handled it all in taking on the L'Oréal e-Strat Challenge. After eight weeks of competition, a three-member team from Bentley placed second in the United States, as measured by the stock price they earned in an elaborate computer simulation.

Laura Ganley, Bashemai Canty and Alexandra Poznyak, second-year students in the Information Age MBA program, beat teams from Harvard, Stanford and Princeton to win the No. 2 spot and recognition at an awards ceremony held at L'Oréal's NYC headquarters. Internationally, the Bentley group placed 21st among 789 teams from 50 countries.

During the six-round simulation, the students ran a virtual cosmetics business, making decisions about whether to launch new brands, how to market them, and how to deal with fulfillment. They saw their stock price rise and fall relative to other virtual companies, in a game designed by marketing and business simulation

developer Strat X. The team's best round generated a stock-price jump of 800 points, which put the Bentley MBAs first in the U.S. and ninth internationally.

“We got together about once a week,” says Laura Ganley, who is working toward a career in brand management. “We supported what we wanted and challenged each other.”

According to L'Oréal officials, the simulation is meant to test the analytical, management and marketing skills of competitors, while introducing them to the company.

“There was a tremendous amount of learning,” Canty says. “We got instant feedback from our decisions. Learning concepts is one thing. When you do a simulation, it's a whole different ballgame.”

For example, textbook-advocated strategies sometimes failed. At another point, the Bentley group lost market share for a newly launched product because they couldn't build manufacturing capacity quickly enough.

“It felt like you were in the senior management of a company and had to make decisions about marketing, IT strategy, brands and the brand portfolio, R and D, distribution channels, and pricing,” says Poznyak, a former brand manager for Coca-Cola. “It took time to discuss and agree on everything, but we did. We worked as a team.”

The three women traveled to New York in late April for the L'Oréal awards ceremony, where they made a short presentation to the \$13.7 billion cosmetics manufacturer. The audience included the CEO of L'Oréal USA, the senior vice president of human resources, and members of the HR and marketing departments.

“We presented our strategy to top management, and they loved it!” Poznyak reports. “They were trying to convince us to look at long-term opportunities with L'Oréal.”

— Ellen Prihodko



MBA students (l. to r.) Bashemai Canty, Alexandra Poznyak and Laura Ganley with L'Oréal Senior VP Jean Paul Agon, at the ceremony recognizing the Bentley team's second-place finish.

## LAUNCHING PAD *Students boost skills by helping real ventures get off the ground*

**When it comes to real-world business experience,** there is no shortage of business schools that claim to offer students an advantage. But few undergraduate opportunities are as ambitious — or as intriguing — as Bentley's GB 301.

Integrated Business Functions is a single course that does the work of three: traditional junior-year courses in marketing, finance, and operations management. Moreover, students learn these subjects in a real-world context, by writing a business plan for an actual company launching a new product or service. As part of Bentley's Business Core curriculum, GB 301 is required of all bachelor of science candidates as of fall 2001.

Studying the three disciplines together and "relating them to a real company with real issues" is what sets GB 301 apart from courses at other business schools, according to Senior Lecturer in Marketing Perry Lowe. He joined Associate Professor of Finance Donna Fletcher in designing the course, and takes the lead in recruiting the businesses and nonprofits that serve as living case studies.

**"[THIS COURSE] IS A NEW PROPOSITION EVERY SEMESTER, EVERY MINUTE."**

For students, GB 301 is a high-stakes proposition. Worth six credits, the course introduces new subjects, puts participants in a client relationship for perhaps the first time, and requires both quality scholarship and strong interpersonal skills. Students meet four times each week: once for each academic subject and once for the business plan project. The return on investment is the ability to think holistically about business challenges and put theories into practice.

"It was a lot of work and long nights, but it paid off," says economics-finance major Christopher Mills,

whose group advised the Boston Harbor Alliance on setting up a new retreat center and ecology camp. "Now I can say I helped manage financials for a \$5 million organization."

From a teaching standpoint, the challenge is to provide comprehensive, consistent learning experiences for undergraduates, via a wide array of projects that change each fall and spring the course is offered. Meeting that challenge, says Lowe, depends on the synergy among three factors: the companies, the faculty, and the technology.

### **The companies: sharing their challenges**

To be a good fit with GB 301, a company or nonprofit has to have finance, marketing and operations management components strong enough to challenge students without being impossibly complex. Just as important, it needs executives who are enthusiastic about working with undergraduates.

Gail O'Reilly, owner of Made in Armenia Direct, an importer and online marketer of Armenian crafts, was quick to see the course's appeal when she needed help with the business plan for her fledgling venture. "How could I say no?" she says. "Why would I not want these students — marketing, finance and operations management majors — looking at my business?"

Student teams, with support from their professors, helped Reilly work through pricing models, supply-chain management, and other basic but important business issues.

Five companies per semester bare their books and business challenges to Bentley students, with up to 18 six-member teams working on each project. Faculty members conduct most of the client contact to avoid overwhelming the businesses with individual student questions.

"This is highly competitive," says Joseph Calo, whose team was among those that devised strategies for Entercom Communications, to improve the radio station owner's annual Taste of Boston event. "No one wants anyone else to know what makes their project unique."

Much of the course's real-world challenge lies in the range of businesses that sign on. From small startups like Armenia Direct to major corporations, each provides its own set of hurdles — and calls for flexibility from the faculty and curriculum.

"This course requires us to be targeted in what we teach," says Instructor in Operations Management James Salisbury, who heads the OM component of GB 301 and taught the class that worked with Armenia Direct. "We teach to the project. This semester, I focused on facilitating goods rather than production."

Other companies test students in other ways. A project for New England Wood Pellet, for instance, challenged students to pull a representative sample from the relatively modest number of consumers who use wood pellets as an energy source for home heating. Entercom presented an opposite problem: so much available data that students had trouble finding consensus.

No matter what the specifics of their project, students in GB 301 learn how general business lessons work (or don't) in real-life situations. "When I look back, I see the value," says computer information systems major Laine Monado. "On an internship with Lycos, I was able to apply almost everything I'd learned."

### **The faculty: doing their homework**

The nearly 20 faculty participants in GB 301 have had to modify curricula, adapt mid-course to changing business needs, and plan in collaboration with other section leaders. In short, they've worked more like business people than traditional academics.

"One of the tricky parts is teaching what the students need, when they need it," says finance professor Fletcher. "When they need to do a cash-flow analysis, will they know how?"

Meanwhile, the faculty who teach the project component of the course dig into a different challenge: translating a company's needs into academic problems that students can understand. A key requirement for these professors, says Lowe, is "knowing the real world very well. They need to understand the specific business needs as well as the academics."

Along with having experience in a particular client's industry, the project faculty also must be comfortable with the ambiguities of real-time case studies. "This is a new proposition every semester, every minute," says Lowe, whose own business experience includes consulting on strategic development and marketing-based initiatives for clients ranging from startups to Fortune 100 corporations. "You never know where the research will go."

### **The technology: fueling discovery**

Like all business advisers, the students in GB 301 rely on technology to get the job done.

They start off at the library, using Bentley's many electronic databases to develop an opportunity analysis that details their company's market and competitors, changes in buyer behavior, and new product activity. If the company or its competitors are public, students may also explore resources in the Trading Room. For

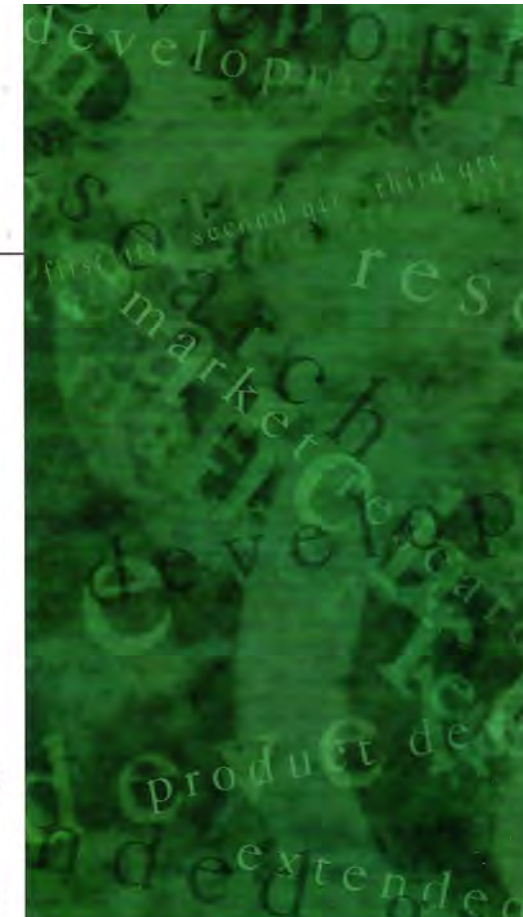
the market research phase, they turn to Bentley's Center for Marketing Technology (CMT). There, students conduct focus-group interviews with professional-caliber equipment.

When the time arrives for quantitative research, the CMT comes through with Perseus Survey data collection software. For most projects, the student teams propose survey questions, which the professor merges and presents as a single market research questionnaire for the company's approval.

To gather the highest volume of consistent data, all student teams working with a particular company use the same questionnaire. These can be distributed to customers and prospects by mail, Web posting, or however best suits the company. All student teams have access to these results. Individual teams also can load the questionnaires onto CMT-provided Palm handheld devices to survey their own contacts as "proprietary" sources.

When the questionnaires are returned, students use the Perseus system to tabulate data and produce spreadsheets. Those who are so inclined can supplement these reports using advanced data-mining software like SPSS and SAS. When a project calls for demographic information, students have access to Arbitron's Scarborough databases for Boston, New York and Los Angeles. (Bentley is the only college to make Arbitron available to students.)

When all the results are in and recommendations compiled, students present their work. Depending on the company's size, they may find themselves offering advice to marketing directors, operations managers, or CEOs. Satisfied companies may return to GB 301 the next time they launch a new product or service; some hire the best students as interns. A few executives have found the exchange so rewarding that they've signed on as adjunct faculty. ♦ — Ellen Prihodko



### Ready for liftoff

Since GB 301 began in fall 2001, students have worked on business plans to launch new products or services for these and other companies.

- ArcStream Solutions
- Au Bon Pain
- Boston Harbor Islands National Park
- Centra
- Entercom Communications Corporation
- Exercycle
- Facilitations Ltd.
- Glendale Package Store
- Made in Armenia Direct
- New England Wood Pellet
- Ntirely
- PeopleSoft
- Photocave.com
- Pulse Corporation
- Quadstone Corporation

**THE BOSTON GLOBE AND BOSTON.COM**

**André L. Bell**, vice president for marketing, communication and enrollment, was quoted (March 31) on the correlation between an economic downturn and an increase in applications to MBA programs.

The Sunday Business section (April 28) cited Trustee Professor of Marketing **Rajendra Sisodia** on competitive theory. He is co-author of *The Rule of Three: Surviving and Thriving in Competitive Markets* (The Free Press, 2001).

“MBA students eager to slice through today’s ethical thickets: Many find inspiration from turbulent times,” reports a Sunday Business feature (July 28) quoting Bentley graduate students.

Post-Enron changes in the accounting field led a reporter to sit in on the auditing course taught by **Jay C. Thibodeau**. In the resulting story (February 4), the assistant professor of accountancy observed, “The accounting model we’re working with now was developed for the industrial age” — and may be outdated for information age companies such as Enron. A related *Globe* feature (November 18) quoted Associate Professor of Accountancy **Dorothy A. Feldmann**.

**Ophera A. Davis**, assistant professor of psychology, was tapped for a column (July 7) on leadership qualities. She urges leaders to “focus their energies in creating a culture that creates respect and honors all participants.”

**BOSTON HERALD**

In a story (March 8) about Massachusetts gubernatorial candidates’ web sites, Professor of Government **Christine B. Williams** provided analysis based on her recent research on the web sites of candidates for the U.S. Senate.

**BUSINESS WEEK AND BUSINESS WEEK ONLINE**

Professor of Finance **Leonard Rosenthal** was quoted (April 3) in “Fiorina’s Stereotype-Smashing Performance,” an article on the Compaq–HP merger battle. He was also tapped by CNN/Money (March 21) for comment on the merger, by Bloomberg News (June 18) on Martha Stewart and insider trading, and by *Industry Week* (April 1) on the globalization of stock markets.

“When a Stock’s Rating and Target Collide” quoted **Patrick C. Gregory**, director of the Hughey Center for Financial Services (April 25). In the *Los Angeles Times* (July 29), Gregory commented on investors who got burned by failing to do hard-core analysis during the dot-com bubble. He also was interviewed on July 29 for a WCVB-TV (Channel 5) feature on Bentley’s Wall Street 101 summer camp for high school students.

**Michael J. Tesler**, adjunct instructor in marketing, commented in the February 14 article “Aiming for Plus-Size Growth,” a piece about retailers marketing clothing for larger women.

**CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

Research by Associate Professor of Economics **Swati Mukerjee** and colleagues was featured in a nationally syndicated column (January 29, 2002) on flexible work arrangements.

**COMPUTERWORLD**

“The Stuff of Leaders,” a centerpiece of the magazine’s annual Premier IT Leaders issue and conference, profiles five leadership styles and what makes them tick. As catalogued by Professor of Management and Psychology **Aaron J. Nurick** and Associate Professor and Director of Field-Based Learning **Susan M. Adams**, the five styles are coach, diplomat, strategist, visionary and innovator. Read the feature online at [www.bentley.edu/news-events/computerworld.pdf](http://www.bentley.edu/news-events/computerworld.pdf).

**William T. Schiano**, professor of electronic commerce, commented (February 18) for the story “Enron Lesson: Tech is for support—Fall fuels questions about for-profit IT.”

**CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR**

A November 29 feature on *Muscular Christianity: Manhood and Sports in Protestant America 1880-1920* (Harvard University Press, 2001) was one of several mentions the book received. Author **Clifford W. Putney**, assistant professor of history, was also interviewed by the History Channel for a documentary on the 150th anniversary of the YMCA.

**ENTREPRENEUR**

In the magazine’s 25th anniversary issue, Senior Lecturer in Marketing **Perry Lowe** illustrated why the most effective marketing promotions are those that target consumers one-to-one.

**FINANCIAL TIMES**

In a feature report (June 22), Professor of History **Joyce Lee Malcolm** cited soaring statistics for armed crime in Britain, arguing that government policies there deprive people of the right to protect themselves and have gone wrong. Malcolm is the author of *Guns and Violence* (Harvard University Press, 2002) and senior adviser, MIT Security Studies Program.

**INVESTOR’S BUSINESS DAILY**

For “Learn to Analyze Details: Odes to a Sharper Mind” (February 11), Professor of English **George Ellenbogen** spoke on poetry for CEOs.

**NETWORK WORLD**

**Phillip G. Knutel**, director of education and research services, discussed (April 1) “hybrid classes,” which allow Bentley graduate students to alternate between meeting on campus and online, for a single course.

**THE NEW YORK TIMES**

Slade Professor of Management and Information Technology **Mary J. Culnan** was quoted (October 4) in a report on “Securing the Lines of a Wired Nation.” Culnan has been appointed to the advisory board for IBM’s Privacy Institute.

**PC WORLD**

**Gerald R. Ferrera**, Adamian Professor of Law, is quoted in the April 2002 issue as part of “Do Online Complaints Pay Off? More ticked-off buyers are taking their gripes to the Web.”

**SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN**

*The Riddle of the Compass*, by Associate Professor of Mathematics **Amir D. Aczel**, was named an Editor’s Choice for 2001. This latest work by Aczel (Harcourt, 2001) also earned a Best Books of 2001 ranking, in the nonfiction category, from the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. Aczel was a recent guest on National Public Radio’s “Science Friday.”

**USA TODAY**

In a September 27 article, **Gregory J. Hall**, associate professor of behavioral and political sciences, addressed post-September 11 terrorism and security issues.

**THE WALL STREET JOURNAL**

As the press examines many aspects of ethical business practice in the wake of Enron, **W. Michael Hoffman**, executive director, Center for Business Ethics (CBE), has been quoted extensively by national news organizations, including the *WSJ*, Associated Press, *New York Times*, *New York Daily News*, (NY) *Newsday*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *Boston Globe*, *Business Week*, CNN/Money, *Houston Chronicle*, ABCnews.com, *Worcester Telegram & Gazette*, National Public Radio and New England Cable News. CBE Executive Fellow Dawn-Marie Driscoll has been cited as well.

**Joseph J. Newpol**, professor of taxation, is quoted (July 3) on corporations that move headquarters overseas to escape U.S. taxes on profits earned outside the United States.

*Copies of these and other articles are available from the Public Affairs Office at 781/891-2070. For news of research and recent books by Bentley faculty, check [www.bentley.edu/news-events/faculty](http://www.bentley.edu/news-events/faculty). ♦ — Janet Mendelsohn*

## VOLUNTEERISM DELIVERS DIVIDENDS



Dominic Basile '04 and Amanda Baker '03 were honored for service-learning initiatives that include creating a computer lab and math program at a Waltham elementary school.

**There's an ice cream** truck at MacArthur Elementary School in Waltham, but it doesn't deliver orange Popsicles. No, this "truck" is part of a math software program that turns first-graders into ice cream entrepreneurs, and teaches problem solving, planning and computation. Students are scooping skills from this and other software programs in the school's new state-of-the-art computer lab — a resource made possible in large part by the Bentley Service-Learning Center (BSLC).

In the summer of 2000, MacArthur Elementary turned to the BSLC for help in making the most of a Gillette Company donation of 30 computers. The BSLC has a long-standing relationship with MacArthur, volunteering more than 100 undergraduates each year to run programs such as America Reads, America Counts and Junior Achievement for some 460 students in kindergarten through sixth grade.

Says vice principal Diane Fischer, "When I saw all these computers coming into the school, I knew there was no way we were going to handle it. We're not equipped — we don't have

the manpower, we don't have the know-how. So I said, 'I'm calling [BSLC assistant director] Jeannette MacInnes.'"

Since that first conversation two years ago, MacArthur and the BSLC have built a computer lab to be proud of. The school PTO and BSLC solicited enough funds to purchase 27 additional personal computers. The lab is fully networked to the Internet and used for research projects at all grade levels. All individual classrooms have computers now as well, most from the original Gillette donation.

The lab is staffed nearly every hour of the school day by Bentley students dubbed the "Tech Team." They assist computer teacher Linda King, train teachers and students on software such as Excel and PowerPoint, troubleshoot problems with computers and printers, and serve as a resource for students using the classroom computers. In spring 2002, the lab received new computer chairs and a digital camera thanks to added grants that BSLC secured from Fleet Bank.



"Service learning works best in a community when you have a true partnership," says Franklyn Salimbene, a Bentley law professor who directs the BSLC. "With MacArthur, our students have been there several years. The teachers trust us."

Adds MacArthur school principal Deborah Ireland, "I don't know of another school with a service-learning program like this. Without Bentley, we wouldn't be where we are today. This partnership has really grown. It's just a wonderful connection."

#### Elementary gains

Computer teacher Linda King relies on BSLC students' expertise during her three-day-a-week stint at MacArthur. She has at least one Bentley assistant on hand for each session she teaches, which means "I don't have to be 20 places at once."

Her young learners now work differently as well. "The lab has broadened the scope of what our kids can do," she says. "There are a multitude of opportunities for them to demonstrate what they can do beyond a pencil and paper."

A group of sixth-graders showed off their new skills last spring, wowing members of the Waltham School Committee with a PowerPoint presentation on ancient Egypt.

MacArthur vice principal Diane Fischer "gets goose pimples" when she thinks of the contributions that Bentley students have made. "You see all these college students sitting about with their young charges, and it's inspirational," she says. "To sit down with a young person like that gives them a role model, a mentor. We've seen such self-esteem-building because of that connection."

"In addition to the academic component, it's that social, emotional growth that is also being accomplished. That's very powerful."

#### Making math fun

Bentley senior Amanda Baker has seen the value of one-on-one tutoring as founder and former coordinator of MacArthur's America Counts program, for grades 1 through 3. "Class sizes are 30 to 35 students, and teachers wish they could give that kind of attention," says Baker, now the assistant student programs coordinator for BSLC. "The program uses lots of hands-on learning. Kids suddenly enjoy math because it becomes fun."

America Counts has been successful at MacArthur, with students' math scores improving up to 50 percent.

Praising the scope of Bentley's service-learning programs, principal Ireland recounts what happened when her own daughter, who attends college in Connecticut, expressed interest in volunteering at a nearby high school. "I told her, 'Go to your service-learning center.' But they don't have anything like that. Only the Education Department students get to do those kinds of things."

#### Benefits for Bentley

Projects like those at MacArthur Elementary deliver rewards to Bentley students as well. Many earn valuable course credit by pursuing a "fourth-credit option" in certain information technology and behavioral sciences classes.

To receive the additional one credit, students conduct 20 hours of community service in the semester and produce either a written or oral report. Earning three of these "extra" credits fulfills an arts and sciences or unrestricted elective (or, with approval, a requirement in the student's minor or major field).

### BENTLEY'S SERVICE-LEARNING PROGRAM IS RANKED 10TH NATIONWIDE BY U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT, FOR THE NEW CATEGORY "PROGRAMS THAT ENHANCE LEARNING."

Another plus of service learning is improved class discussion.

"Students have concrete examples to put in their papers and share with the class," says Salimbene. "Service learning makes teaching easier and more fun, and it certainly makes learning more fun for students. They also gain an understanding of the importance of civic engagement."

BSLC scholarship recipients Amanda Baker and Dominic Basile typically devote 15 to 20 hours per week to service. Baker entered Bentley with a BSLC scholarship thanks in part to a high school graduation requirement of 40 hours of service ("I really loved it"). She volunteered at camps, coached softball, and worked on projects through the National Honor Society. An economics-finance major, she even taught English in a Paris school during a semester abroad.

Basile, a computer information systems major who oversees the MacArthur lab, came to Bentley with strong computer skills from the High School of Science and Technology in Springfield, Mass. Joining the BSLC as a freshman, he brought mentoring experience from his high school work in the Key Club and as president of his National Honor Society.

"Service learning gives you a taste of everything. You learn what you like and don't like," says the Bentley junior. "You could get more out of this than an internship where you're just stuffing envelopes all day."

Both Basile and Baker were honored in spring 2002 with the Sally Adamian Award, established by former President Gregory H. Adamian to recognize Bentley undergraduate students who make a significant contribution to the community through participation in service-learning projects. They received \$500 each. (A third student, Abbey Flanagan, received the Adamian award as well for her part in building the MacArthur lab. She has since left Bentley to pursue a degree in criminal justice.)

Building on the success of the MacArthur project quite literally, a second BSLC-run computer lab is under construction at Whittemore Elementary School in Waltham. Twenty-six donated computers should be online in spring 2003. A third lab is in the works as well, for spring 2004. ♦ — JAS



# Framing the Business University

**Adding a brand-new category** to the ranks of higher education calls for having plenty of innovative thinkers in your own ranks. Like, say, an international leader in management information systems whose background includes social work. Or maybe a change management expert who puts a finite lifespan on the relevance of most academic research. Or a scholar of avant-garde theater who finds the traditional liberal arts out of step with today's students.

Such are the respective credentials of Bentley's new academic leadership team: Robert D. Galliers, Margrethe H. Olson (above) and Catherine A. Davy. Here, the three discuss the task at hand — facilitating academic initiatives central to defining Bentley as a business university — and their roles as catalysts and coordinators.

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs



## A roundtable discussion with Bentley's new academic team

By Susan Simpson  
Photos by Brian Smith

► **What does the term "business university" mean? Is Bentley creating something new?**

**Provost Robert Galliers:** The term in some respects represents what already exists at Bentley as much as what is going to be. For example, the arts and sciences is something which is often missing from regular, common-garden business schools. But at Bentley there is clearly an arts and sciences faculty with a huge amount of expertise and a wide range of interests, who are playing a key role in undergraduate business education. Possibly less so today, at the graduate level, but . . .

**Dean of Business Margrethe Olson:** But that's for the foreseeable future.

**Galliers:** Right, that is the potential growth there. So the business university is partly potential and partly what Bentley already is. We're not starting from scratch.

► **What are the strengths that Bentley will be building on?**

**Olson:** One obvious strength is the technological facilities. These are first-rate facilities that you would expect to find only at a major research university. They are competitive with any . . .

**Galliers:** . . . in the world.

**Dean of Arts and Sciences Catherine Davy:** I would say one of the strengths is the commitment to the arts and sciences playing a role in student education. At Bentley, students take 50 percent of their classes in the arts and sciences. There is a real commitment to a well-rounded education. It's a base from which to launch a different way of thinking about who we're educating.

**Galliers:** At Bentley we're thinking about the role the arts and sciences play in an integrated way. To give an example: Regular business schools have their required business ethics course as an add-on. Here, business ethics and the Center of Business Ethics have been around for 25 years. So the Philosophy Department has a role to play in business education. And there is the Center for Business Ethics, for outreach to the outside world.

Another strength, which we want to develop even further, is the international element. . . . The different contexts in this global world of ours need to be understood if you want to conduct business in the 21st century. Just because things are done a certain way in New York City, you can't assume it's the same in Shanghai or Zurich. What we try to do at Bentley is provide an environment to foster that kind of appreciation.

► **How do research and teaching fit into the business university picture?**

**Galliers:** I can imagine that people who were graduated from Bentley in a different era might be concerned that the core values associated with the classroom and teaching would be lost as research receives more emphasis. But being naturally very greedy, I want to have both.

In the U.S., there are the *U.S. News & World Report* rankings. In England, we have a quasi-governmental ranking for every topic, every discipline, every department and every university. It's quite interesting to note that the top research universities actually come out on top in teaching as well. If you attract the best people, you're going to have the best performers, for the most part.

So our strategy in relation to research is to recruit and help develop faculty who have this keen interest in developing their subject, while, at the same time, have the very best interest in students and take their classroom responsibilities very seriously.

► **And launching a doctoral program is on the agenda?**

**Galliers:** Yes, we're considering a doctoral program; the discussion is ongoing. There aren't too many business schools that have the number of specialist master's programs that Bentley has. Typically in the U.S., you have an MBA qualification and a DBA or a PhD in a graduate school. But Bentley has specialist master's degrees. So already we have in place

programs that could be feeders to a doctorate. Already we have in place active researchers in various fields. Already we have in place a technological infrastructure second to none. It's almost a natural progression in relation to the business university concept that we would enter into the doctorate field.

But that's not to say it's going to be a common-garden doctoral program. Why should it be when everything else is special here? What needs development is a tradition of dissertations and projects, applied research so far as the student is concerned. That tradition is only beginning at Bentley, at the honors level.

► **So you want to increase the amount of faculty research done here?**

**Galliers:** Yes. And to make more visible the research that's already being done.

**Davy:** On the arts and sciences side, there is quite a bit of research underway and accomplished.

**Olson:** And on the business side too. The tradition of the institution has been that we're a teaching school, and so a lot of the research isn't as visible as it should be. We have a tremendous faculty.

**Davy:** I was at a teaching school where research was called the "R word." That's another real difference at Bentley. There is research is happening here because it isn't frowned upon the way it might be in some teaching institutions.

**Galliers:** Research and scholarship can take many forms. There is bound to be some pure research going on in certain areas, but for the most part it's going to be applied. Bentley's laboratory is out there in the real world; that's where we get our data. So the fruits of our research have to resonate in terms of issues confronting organizations and society. With the expertise we have here, at the intersection of business and information technology . . . these are topics that will resonate in the business community.



## ACADEMIC ALL-STARS

### ROBERT D. GALLIERS

**Degrees.** AB, Harvard University; MA, Lancaster University; PhD, London School of Economics; Honorary DSc, Turku (Finland) School of Economics and Business Administration

**Specialties.** Information technology and business innovation, change management, knowledge management, information systems strategy, impacts of the Internet on organizations

**Career highlights.** Professor of information systems and research director, Department of Information Systems, London School of Economics; Dean and Lucas Professor of Management, Warwick (England) Business School; Foundation Professor and head of the School of Information Systems, Curtin University of Technology (Australia); co-author, *Strategic Information Management: Challenges and Strategies in Managing Information Systems* (now in its third edition), *Rethinking Management Information Systems: An Interdisciplinary Perspective* and *Information Technology and Organizational Transformation*; joint editor-in-chief, *Journal of Strategic Information Systems*

### MARGRETHE H. OLSON

**Degrees.** BS, University of Michigan; MBA and PhD, Curtis Carlson School of Management, University of Minnesota

**Specialties.** Relationships among information technology, management support and organizational culture; leading strategic change for multinational corporations

**Career highlights.** General manager, global knowledge-based systems, Lend Lease Corporation; chief knowledge officer and consulting director, knowledge management, Lotus Consulting; associate professor and director, Center for Research on Information Systems, School of Business, New York University; co-author, *Management Information Systems: Conceptual Foundations. Structure and Development*

### CATHERINE A. DAVY

**Degrees.** BA, Clarke College; MA and PhD, New York University

**Specialties.** Experimental and avant-garde theater, feminist critical theory

**Career highlights.** Provost and senior vice president, Adelphi University; dean, Peck School of the Arts, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee; associate dean, School of Fine Arts, University of California, Irvine; dean, Fine Arts Division, Alverno College; author of the forthcoming *Born in the WOW Café: Remaking Women's Theatre*

► Do the arts and sciences have a role in that kind of applied, business-centered research?

**Davy:** The real-world relevance of the arts and sciences is not an issue peculiar to Bentley; it's something the arts and sciences should be grappling with nationally. In academia, we've been talking about "interdisciplinary" for 20 years, but we continue to honor and reward research in very narrowly conceived disciplines and departments. One of the great opportunities at Bentley is to cross disciplines and engage in research in a broader sense. That's a real potential.

**Galliers:** We've been talking about "transdisciplinary" research as opposed to "interdisciplinarity" — to indicate that there is something in the space between the disciplines, which is worth investigating.

► Can you give an example?

**Galliers:** Well, let me give an example of why interdisciplinarity hasn't been as successful as it might be.

Let's say the four of us were coming from very different disciplines and working on a common project. It could be quite easy to say, "Let's divide up the task of looking at this particular phenomenon, issue, problem, from our different perspectives." So we get four takes on this thing. Now that can be very useful, if we could somehow synthesize those conclusions. But what tends to happen is that we each look at the research topic from our individual perspective, and then go back into our own field to publish. But what have we actually learned? If, instead, we had communicated to understand each other's frames of reference and terminology and language . . .

**Davy:** . . . and come up with one solid piece that may have different perspectives, but which really presents some breakthrough thinking . . . It's kind of radical: Spaces between the disciplines are suspicious spaces.

**Olson:** They're not seen as "deep."

**Davy:** But they're where the action is and where some real relevance is.

**Galliers:** What's been great about working together is . . . coming to this with different experiences and different backgrounds and so on . . . things emerge from our shared conversations which wouldn't emerge in our individual offices.

**Olson:** The three of us felt this way about the need for transdisciplinary research before we came to Bentley. We didn't know we would share this value. I left academia in 1990. I was in industry for 12 years. I had told so many people I would never go back to academia in a traditional role because the research is so damn irrelevant. On my kinder days, I say the best you can do for relevance of your work is five years. . . . But most of our work is very narrow, very esoteric. I felt there is an opportunity at Bentley to change that model.

**Davy:** I had spent a career feeling like Sisyphus: trying to convince faculty to take the arts and sciences in their own hands and rethink it. I've really felt that potential exists at Bentley.

**Olson:** One of the interesting things as we move forward will be how to mesh the conversations, between business faculty and arts and sciences faculty.

**Davy:** The great thing is, there is already so much conversation between the two groups here.

**Olson:** Much more than at most places. That interaction between the business and arts/sciences faculty goes back to what a business university is — having a strong sense of community among the faculty.

► What's the focus of activities for the short term?

**Davy:** There was a retreat for all arts and sciences faculty in late October.

**Olson:** We've been meeting and having strategic sessions with departments and groups of departments in the business side. Then there have been some

open forums. The point is, the main initiatives taking place now are conversations, not actions that we — the academic team — initiate. We are engaging the faculty in conversations from which the next set of activities will emerge.

**Galliers:** Right. We, as a community, will be launching these things.

**Olson:** We should mention having several key new faculty. They are seasoned academics in the model that we want to grow, who have experience in bringing in external funding, who have significant publications — most of them transdisciplinary — and who have real responsibilities for helping us with this.

► Is there particular experience in your background that you each expect to draw on?

**Olson:** Most of my 12 years in industry was about managing change. I did research on change management and the effects of technology on organizational change, and I've had to manage change myself. So I've learned that the communication has to be constant and relentless, because the void is filled very quickly with assumptions and rumors. Also, change takes a lot of time; you can't execute quickly. And you have to pay attention to all aspects of the process systematically. If you launch a bunch of different initiatives and people don't see that they all fit together with a mission, then you're going to lose support.

**Galliers:** There are some parallels between Bentley and the institution where I worked in Australia, which was moving from primarily undergraduate to graduate and then to postgraduate study, and developing a more visible presence. Later, as dean at Warwick, I realized that to succeed internationally, we needed more than a vibrant research community — which we had. We also needed a means for communicating about those initiatives and the results, internationally and in partnership with industry. I think those experiences will be helpful here at Bentley.

**Davy:** Having been at two universities that were undergoing drastic budget cuts, I was thrown into situations of "How are we going to rethink what we're doing?" So the process of rethinking and innovating — as we'll be doing at Bentley — is very familiar to me.

► Are there ways that alumni can help?

**Olson:** We already draw on alumni to give us advice, and we have to do more of that. There is a business advisory council at the graduate school that we may want to expand. We've been talking about applied research and developing connections with the business community. Our alums offer a natural place to start with that. We have an incredible number of CFOs locally, and well-placed individuals in the software industry — some very, very impressive, successful alums who care about Bentley. In the domain of bringing faculty and real-world problems together, they're going to be very important.

**Davy:** Alums can function as ambassadors to the outside world, in terms of what's going on at Bentley.

► There is a definite sense of energy and optimism in this room.

**Olson:** You should interview us at 5:00.

**Galliers:** But there is energy; it's been great. I feel so pleased to be part of this trip.

**Davy:** Me too.

**Olson:** Yes, me too. Even last night we were so dead tired, but we were laughing.

**Galliers:** When I first visited Bentley, I remember saying, "I don't know what they're on, but everyone has a smile on their face. Can I have some?" But it's true: There's a sense that you can actually implement the ideas. There isn't enough time in the day to run with all these things, but they are coming out.

**Olson:** When I interviewed here, they asked, "Why do you want to be a dean? Why do you want to go back to academia?" For me, it was the sense of what's going on here, and the potential for what can be. That got me here.

**To Davy and Galliers:** It got you here and it got you here.

**Davy:** I sense a real hunger among arts and sciences faculty — a hunger to figure it out, to make a contribution.

**Olson:** We have almost all the raw material we need. We have the hunger in the arts and sciences faculty, we have curiosity in the business faculty, and we have senior people that our longtime faculty are excited to have with them. There's a sense — not universally, but in many places — a sense of excitement, anticipation.

**Davy:** A faculty member in the English Department came to see me just yesterday. She said, "I'm so glad you're here, we deserve you."

**Galliers:** There is that sense. Bentley needed us and we needed Bentley. ♦

## PROGRESS SO FAR

Convened open forums for faculty to discuss research, teaching and other key issues

- Held a retreat for arts and sciences faculty
- Hired leading scholars to complement existing faculty expertise and promote research
- Formed task forces to strategize on academic advising and incorporating ethics, service and social responsibility into a Bentley education
- Established professorships that recognize excellence in teaching and curriculum development
- Sponsored lectures and other programming that raises Bentley's academic profile and bridges business and the arts and sciences

# High-Tech Test Drive

Design  
and  
Usability  
Testing  
Center  
fuels  
competitive  
advantage  
for  
corporate  
clients,  
graduate  
students



MSHFID students Christopher McFarlane (front) and Christopher Whelan

by Maura King Scully

**You go online** to order a book or a pair of jeans.

Eventually you find what you want, select it, proceed to checkout, key in the requisite information, click on "complete purchase," and then . . . nothing. Hitting the reload button in case your information didn't input correctly, you get an error message that pins the blame on "sector 357." Annoyed and frustrated, you leave the web site, not sure if you've made a purchase or not.

**Welcome to what information designers call a usability nightmare.**



AT BENTLEY, corporate and non-profit clients have a dream resource for avoiding such scenarios. The Design and Usability Testing Center enables organizations to test drive their high-tech products — pre-launch — for ease of use by prospective customers. Staffed by a seasoned usability engineer, faculty experts in information design, and master's degree candidates in the Human Factors and Information Design program, the 2-year-old center has a growing client list and reputation.

### Putting users in the driver's seat

The center's founder, William M. Gribbons, PhD, is pleased but not surprised by the success. "With the growth of e-commerce, businesses now recognize that a good user-experience is paramount," says Gribbons, an expert in the field who directs Information Design and Human Factors programs at the college. "They know they need the services of labs like ours before they launch.

"While the revenue is nice, what's even better is the steady stream of clients who wouldn't otherwise come to the Bentley campus," he adds. "E-commerce and high-tech leaders contract with the center, have a good experience, and transfer that to our academic program. We're finding that clients tend to either hire our graduates or send their staff to us for professional development."

The overseer of day-to-day operations at the center is another stalwart of the design and usability community, Chauncey Wilson. He and Gribbons can claim a combined 40 years' experience in human factors — quite an accomplishment in a field that's barely 50 years old itself. Over time, the two have tested just about everything: e-commerce and e-learning tools; Internet applications; brokerage systems and financial software; network monitoring and maintenance tools; pharmaceutical, insurance and decision-support software — you name it.

"We'll test anything you can get through the lab's doors," Wilson says with a smile.

A not-for-profit business running on an academic campus, the center competes head-to-head with established labs and consulting agencies. "The difference is, we don't look at just usability," Wilson

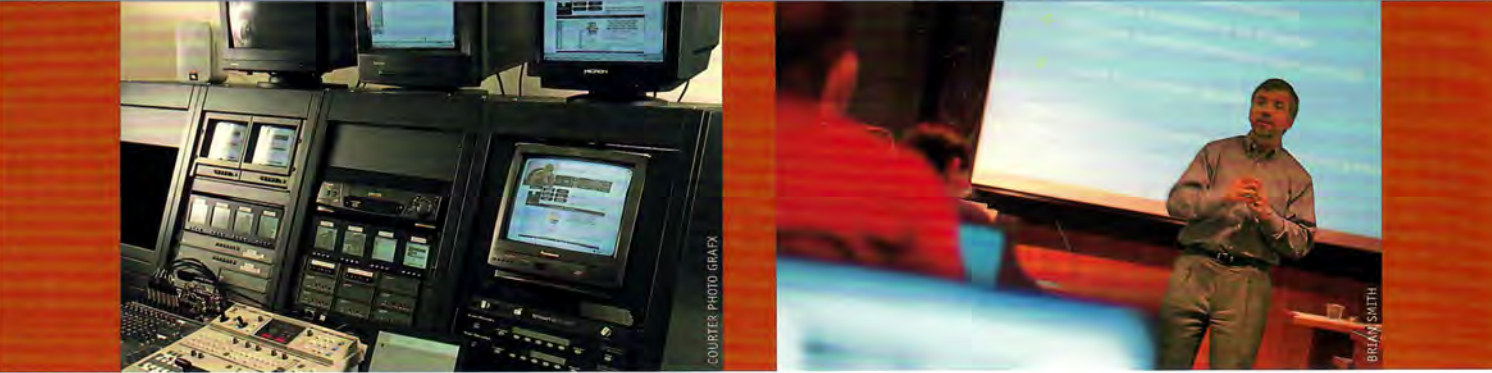
explains. "We also look at product success, and we consider issues like trust, design and packaging. We like to say that we test the whole user-experience rather than a product."

Thanks to this dynamic duo, along with a cadre of satisfied clients and successful information design graduates, the word about the Design and Usability Testing Center is getting out. *Business 2.0*, the *Boston Business Journal* and the *Boston Globe* are among the news outlets that have covered the center's innovative work.

### Dot-com lessons

And the work keeps coming. Gribbons attributes growing demand to a business world that finally recognizes an essential truth: Having the hottest new technology doesn't matter if people can't use it. Companies that pushed web portals and e-commerce applications to market before testing them learned the hard way, that a poor user-experience with a product results in lost profits. Honing products before launch has become standard practice for many companies.

"As a leader in information technology, Bentley was perfectly positioned to take advantage of this new business model," says Gribbons.



COURTESY PHOTO GRAPHX

BRIAN SMITH

The book *Built for Use: Driving Profitability Through the User Experience* (McGraw-Hill, 2002) points to the importance of user testing as a valuable lesson of the dot-com era. "Usability is now linked to revenues — and profits — as never before," writes author Karen Donoghue. If a customer can't easily put the product to work, she says, they'll find another product. (The book goes on to cite the Design and Usability Testing Center and indexes Wilson among its list of experts.)

Fellow student Christopher Whelan has a background that's common among MSHFID candidates: He began his career in marketing communications, writing press releases. Then came the rise of the Web and "the company didn't have a web site, so I built it."

Whelan developed his skills on the job, eventually becoming a functional analyst in the company's interactive products department. But he knew he needed to learn more.

The three are among the 60 candidates for the MSHFID, a 3-year-old program that's quickly gaining a reputation for linking the technical, psychological and engineering facets of usability. That's an unusual combination, notes Chauncey Wilson: Information design programs tend to focus on either technology or psychology.

"Bentley students take business courses in addition to Human Factors, so they're not only technically proficient, they understand business," he says. "This gives our students a striking advantage over graduates of most other programs."

"We define success by where we've been able to place graduates," adds Gribbons, ticking off a list of companies where alumni serve as usability professionals: Staples.com, H&R Block Financial, Monster, Sun Systems, Fidelity, Oracle.

Lena Dmitrieva is hoping to be one of those success stories when she graduates. "The program has opened up a lot of doors for me," she says. "Eventually, I'd like to go into consulting, but first I'll probably work with a company on their usability team."

All three students praise the program's emphasis on networking. "Both Bill and Chauncey encourage students to become involved with usability professional associations," notes Dmitrieva. "They invite outside speakers into class, and we go to different conferences and lectures so we're exposed to the wider world of design and usability."

Above: Information Design program director Bill Gribbons makes a point. At right, Design and Usability Testing Center director Chauncey Wilson (r.) collaborates in the testing room.

## The five-year goal is becoming to the usability world what MIT's Media Lab is to emerging technologies.

### Living laboratory

Students, too, find the center a valuable resource. Those enrolled in the Master of Science in Human Factors in Information Design (MSHFID) program assist in the testing process and use the facility for course work. Candidates for the Bentley Information Design certificate are able to take advantage of the usability center as well. It is also the setting for the Usability Boot Camp [see right].

Before he enrolled at Bentley, Christopher McFarlane was working on customer management software at Fidelity. He ran across the MSHFID program while researching likely MBA programs and "it struck a chord." After attending an information session, McFarlane was hooked; he started the program in 2001.

"The huge benefit is getting to work with people who have similar roles in different companies," Whelan says of the MSHFID program. "Often, companies have only one or two interface professionals. So if you're in usability, you don't have many peers. But people in my classes have impressive work experience."

McFarlane, Whelan, and classmate Lena Dmitrieva all have fellowships at the Design and Usability Testing Center. That means they work with clients 20 hours a week in addition to taking classes.

"Working at the center is a great asset, because I get to work with real clients on a diversity of real projects," notes Dmitrieva. "It's been a great experience."

### Basic Training

Minus fatigues and dog tags, the Usability Boot Camp at Bentley College has a lot in common with its military counterpart: eager recruits immersed in a new environment, learning key skills in a short but intensive training period. For Bentley boot campers, the basic training is in requirements gathering, scenario building, interactive prototyping, and other elements of design and usability testing.

Usability testing, as the name suggests, is the process by which companies test web sites, software programs, hardware, and related consumer products to assess how easy they are for a person to use. With more companies recognizing the value of such testing, usability professionals are much in demand — as are programs that teach usability skills.

Two sessions of the Usability Boot Camp held at Bentley to date drew participants from around the U.S. and beyond. Presentations and hands-on workshops introduced software and hardware programmers, web architects, and information designers to the many facets of product design and usability testing, including the politics that can drive decisions behind the scenes. Participants also had an opportunity to conduct and observe real usability tests.

Representatives from companies such as Hewlett-Packard, Cigna, Verizon and Partners HealthCare learned from experts who included Bentley's Bill Gribbons and Chauncey Wilson; Beth Loring, principal research scientist at the American Institutes for Research; Carolyn Snyder, co-author of *Web Site Usability: A Designer's Guide*; and Meena Venkateswaran, a usability consultant who teaches web design and usability testing.

"Bentley did a good job of soliciting external people to lend to areas where they had the greatest expertise," says boot camp participant Greg Stone, director of quality assurance and usability for Verizon.com in Texas. "The fact that the experts gave different perspectives and approaches was helpful."

Pamela Brann, a usability engineer for Hewlett-Packard in Colorado, agrees. "I've gone to a lot of conferences, but the combination of teamwork and hands-on experience made this one much more useful."

A third Usability Boot Camp is scheduled for March 10 to 14. ❖ — MKS



BRIAN SMITH

### "Saved us from ourselves"

In that wider world of usability, Bentley's center has gained some enthusiastic supporters. Corporate client Vanessa DiMauro, director of online communities at Computerworld, came here in May 2001 to test the Computerworld Executive Suite, an online community of chief information officers.

"Building a site like this is a significant investment," she says. "It was critical that it be useful, usable and engaging to our target audience. CIOs are busy executives who have low tolerance for bells and whistles, and don't suffer fools gladly. We had to know before we launched whether we had them or lost them. Through testing, we found some design choices that kept

members from using the site as intended. In that way, the Design and Usability Testing Center saved us from ourselves."

Another booster is Johannah Davies, senior project manager at BaseSix, a web design and strategic marketing firm that works with such companies as AT&T Broadband, General Electric and HBO. In December 2001, she brought a national client to campus for usability testing of an e-commerce site.

"Our client was extremely impressed with the technology and professionalism of everyone at the center," Davies notes. "And I have to agree that it was superior to another center I'd used. It's a very smart process. Instead of just monitoring a user's random site-exploration, Bentley's center gave testers specific tasks and one-on-one facilitation, which provided much more effective results."

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology has signed on as a client, too. The school needed an expert review of its alumni association online community, a complex web site with 2,000 pages. Maggy Bruzelius, director of the school's alumni network services and an Information Design certificate candidate at Bentley, asked Chauncey Wilson to address a group of 50 MIT staffers to prepare them for the audit.

"He faced a tough audience," admits Bruzelius. "But within a few minutes, he had the respect of the whole room. He talked about what usability was and why web sites change, and presented the business arguments as to why that's important. And he supplemented his talk with plenty of examples."

On the near-term agenda, there are plans to add a faculty and student research component to the center. "We've started accepting proposals, and they're coming in from across the disciplines," reports Gribbons. The five-year goal is broader national recognition: becoming to the usability world what MIT's Media Lab is to emerging technologies.

Ambitious? You bet. But the aim is within reach, according to the center's founder. "The Design and Usability Testing Center is uniquely Bentley," Gribbons says. "It reflects the spirit of a place that's willing to take a risk." ❖

# Reality Check

Experience, skills and a few surprises for Information Age MBA program grads

by Ellen Prihodko

Call it a case study in the new-economy principle of continuous innovation. From day one, Bentley's 4-year-old Information Age MBA program has relied on relentless consultation and strategic fine-tuning to stay in synch with student needs, faculty expertise,

and employer demand. The latest changes, effective this fall, add flexibility and create more common ground between full-time and part-time versions of the program (see page 22). Meanwhile, two classes of Information Age MBAs are busy exercising their business and IT savvy for employers large and small. Read on to meet four of these grads.

PHOTOS BY COURTESY PHOTO GRAFX

## Major Impact

With 17 years' experience in sales and marketing, Ellie Vogel can spot a "sales job" at 20 paces. So after attending an information session for the Information Age MBA program, her first step was to meet, one-on-one, with the program director.

"I asked her what the program was about, who designed it, how relevant it was to industry's need, and so on," Vogel says of her cordial but pointed discussion with management professor Judith B. Kamm. "She explained that the faculty had talked to people in industry, incorporated their ideas into the curriculum, and then brought the curriculum back for their input."

At the time, Vogel was a successful consultant to the medical devices and biotechnology industries; her background was in biology. And her expectations were high. "If I was going to take two years out of my career to go back to school," she says, "I wanted it to have a big impact."

### Looking for the best

Vogel enrolled in the Information Age MBA program in fall 1999. "It was brand new, so the faculty wanted to get the best from us," she remembers. "We worked hard."

For her, the work included four major consulting projects during the program's two years. First came a supply-chain analysis at a high-tech manufacturing plant. "We mapped the steps it took them to get a new order out," she says, pausing for the punch line: "There were more than a hundred steps just to process an order."

In fact, the paperwork logjams occasionally got so bad that bills went unpaid, the company got put on credit hold, and customers' orders couldn't be completed because of missing parts. The situation opened her eyes to a behind-the-scenes aspect of business she hadn't dealt with before. "Business process was something I didn't know, but it's very fundamental."

### Impact of innovation

Vogel's next stop was the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative, a quasi-government organization that monitors the level of innovation in the state. During a summer internship, she compiled data on mergers, acquisitions, IPOs and patents. "It was fascinating to look at ways that innovation impacts Massachusetts and keeps people employed."

## Ellie Vogel, Class of 2001

The pace quickened even more in year two of her program, when Vogel completed projects for both her Management Consulting Teams and Customer-Focused Management courses. For the Teams course, Vogel's group worked for the Massachusetts High Tech Council, interviewing high-tech CEOs and human resources directors throughout Massachusetts on the impact of rising health-care costs on the IT industry. Her team developed a web survey, collected and analyzed the numbers, and, in the process, re-negotiated the scope of the project several times.

"I had been mostly on the technical side of business — in the sciences. This was multilevel, multiorganization problem-solving," she says. "The commitment of the team and our faculty adviser to get it done was incredible."

For her other course project, Vogel analyzed a web site and online forums that the Neurology group at Massachusetts General Hospital had developed for patients with neurological disorders.

"The group was very innovative in applying the technology, but since the Web was a new tool, they didn't understand yet what was going on with the users," she explains. Vogel's questionnaire, which asked why visitors came to the site and about its value compared with a doctor's visit, generated more than 1,000 responses for her client to use in redesigning the site.

### Promise meets practice

After earning her MBA in May 2001, Vogel continued at Bentley part time, to pursue an MS in computer information systems. She also took a full-time position at Genzyme Therapeutics. There, as a senior product manager, she has plenty of opportunity to see how the promise of the Information Age MBA program squares with real-world needs.

"I'm dealing with legal, regulatory and language issues in multiple countries; it's complex," Vogel says. "Now I know how to break issues and projects into pieces to make them manageable. I got that thinking from Bentley."

## Brian Malone, Class of 2002

A month before commencement, in the midst of a tepid job market, Information Age MBA candidate Brian Malone did the nearly impossible. He landed not just a job, but a dream job: a fast track to senior management at Raytheon, through its competitive IT Leadership Development program.

Working for the nation's leading defense contractor perfectly combines Malone's Bentley-acquired IT knowledge with his prior background in military operations.

"They say they give you 10 years' experience in two years," he says with no hint of trepidation. The program comprises four rotations at Raytheon sites across the country, for up-close exposure to various management styles and facets of the company. He'll work with senior managers and finish poised to join the leadership ranks.

A longtime recruiter at Bentley, Raytheon had posted a recruitment schedule for the leadership development program with the Miller Center for Career Services. Malone had his first interview on campus and then was off and running. "We met the CIO and got a tour of headquarters," he says. "It was great."

### A good fit

The former engineering major is actually a two-time applicant to Bentley. He was working as a U.S. Air Force officer and as a budget analyst at Hanscom Air Force Base when he first applied, to the part-time MBA program, in 1998. He was accepted, but a re-assignment to Montgomery, Alabama, kept him from matriculating. By the time he reapplied in 2000, the full-time Information Age MBA program had been launched.

"I wanted not just business but technology skills," he remembers, "so the program really was a good fit for me."

Malone's engineering background and new IT skills were a good fit for the Management Consulting Teams project he took on as an MBA student. His team worked with BAE Systems, an \$18 billion defense and aerospace contractor based in Nashua, N.H. The assignment: to develop a knowledge management system that allowed engineers to extract knowledge learned from one project — for instance, a problem-solving technique — and use it in others.

## Fast Track

"These engineers were very high-end users," Malone explains. "It was difficult just getting them to explain what they needed."

### Managing knowledge

At first, the Bentley team intended to provide a software solution for the knowledge management challenge. Ultimately, though, they scaled back the project, deciding they could add the most value by developing a conceptual model for how knowledge management could work at BAE. They interviewed engineers and other target users, knowledge-management system vendors, and outside consultants to lay the framework for a comprehensive system. Later, a second team of Bentley students picked up the project and continued with implementation.

"Knowledge management is relatively new," Malone says. "Part of the project was just getting BAE to understand how many steps were involved in getting a system implemented."

An internship at Waltham-based Impole Corp. offered an additional boost to Malone's IT skills. Impole, a sales-process consulting firm, uses primary market intelligence and database management, among other techniques, to increase clients' sales growth.

"Impole is a small marketing firm with a lot of data. In a company like that, data is what holds all the value," he explains. A position managing databases in the IT department put Malone in the company's nerve center — a hard-to-beat venue for showing future employers his ability to oversee a complex IT project.

### In harmony

Meanwhile, in the classroom, professors and guest speakers were valuable sources of information and inspiration. "The professors — Jay Coopridge stands out for me — were extremely good. And speakers helped reinforce what we were learning," he says. "They faced the same problems. It was reassuring to know that we were reading from the same piece of music."

So, when the dream offer came along, Malone was ready with solid work experience and a strong knowledge of the defense industry, engineering, and information technology. "I've really been impressed with Bentley — with the technology and the people. I'm glad it all worked out the way it did."



CASE STUDY

CASE STUDY

## The program at a glance

**Paths of study.** Information Age MBA students can choose the timetable best suited to their work situation, career goals and other commitments.

**Cohort Option:** A full-time, one-and-a-half- to two-year program with most classes held during the day; students move through the program as a group. (September start only.)

**Flexible Option:** Designed for working professionals and others who need more freedom to set their schedule. Students study in the evening, part time or full time, based on the number of courses pursued in a given semester. (Start in January or September.)

**Current enrollment.** Cohort: 65 Flexible: 657

**In the classroom.** Students take a combination of Business Fundamentals, Information Age Core, and elective courses. Internships, consulting projects, and courses with a field-work component offer hands-on experience with real companies.

**On the job.** Within three months of graduating in 2002, students in the program's Cohort option had landed positions across the business spectrum, at an average annual salary of \$65,000. A sampling:

- Business Analyst, Quadrant Software
- Information Systems Auditor, IBM
- Investment Banking Associate, ABN AMRO
- E-commerce Sales Analyst, Staples Inc.
- Business Analyst, John Hancock
- Founder, Beacon Marketing Group
- Executive Director, Executive Women International

### Creating Solutions

#### Josh Buckley, Class of 2001

For Josh Buckley, the value of the Information Age MBA program has been in the details.

"The benefits have played out in an indirect way for me," says the 2001 graduate. "Basic skills, like having a good framework for problem solving, have been the most important."

A history major as an undergraduate, Buckley worked for six years in manufacturing, procurement and business systems before deciding to pursue a graduate degree. "I basically fell into my careers," he explains. "To move forward, I started looking at MBA programs."

#### Getting up to speed

Though he didn't know about the "information age" revamp of the MBA program when Bentley first surfaced on his radar screen, he was immediately intrigued. "Every business school tries to have a twist," he says. "Bentley's made sense for me because I wanted to get up to speed on information technology and trends."

Mission accomplished. By graduation, newly refined business skills and IT expertise had positioned Buckley to step right into a job at Compaq Global Services (now Hewlett Packard Services). As a business systems analyst, he works on business development for markets such as electronic procurement, a fast-growing category of software systems that support online negotiating and purchasing. The job demands market research skills, the ability to develop the right package of products and services for the right client, and an aptitude for generating customer demand and interacting with the sales force.

"The tools I got at Bentley have helped me get my arms around the bigger business questions," he says. "Skills like data analysis, critical thinking, and project management have made a big difference. My education enabled me to identify the focus of a large-scale opportunity."

#### Customer focused, solution driven

In particular, Buckley credits the Bentley program for developing his technical know-how to take understanding customer needs a step further. He is able to analyze emerging technologies, like wireless communication, and apply them to the business needs of his clients. As he puts it: "Now I'm creating solutions for end-users."

Hands-on experience during his student days helped to cement Buckley's customer- and solution-driven focus. For example, as part of the required Business Processes course in year one of the program, he worked on a student team assigned to a project at Putnam Investments. The team mapped processes and workflows for the Putnam mailroom, ultimately producing a set of feasibility recommendations to improve systemwide mail processing for the investment company.

"The emphasis was on teamwork," he says. "We gained self-awareness and awareness of other work styles. It was great experience."

#### Managing relationships

The following year, Buckley found himself at a small software consulting firm, again focusing on process. "We learned a lot about the consulting process," he says. "We spent a lot of time just figuring out what the questions were, what the scope of the project was, and what the client deliverables should be. It was constantly changing. My teammates will laugh if they read this, but that's what it was all about — learning to manage a client relationship."

The opportunity to attend the MBA program full time was another big plus. "Two years to experiment with business concepts and workplace issues in a no-risk environment was incredibly valuable," Buckley says. "I think back to mundane exercises like playing different roles in running a meeting — which I didn't always take seriously at the time. Now I realize how basic and important that was. You need certain skills to be effective and to get people to pay attention to you."

#### Amy Goldfarb, Class of 2002

Amy Goldfarb used to help people control calories and analyze nutritional intake. Now, as a newly minted Bentley MBA, the former dietitian is helping businesses control expenses and analyze cash flow.

The dramatic career shift was four years in the making. With a graduate degree in nutritional science and six years of experience, Goldfarb had a good job as a clinical dietitian when her employer, Beth Israel Hospital, merged with nearby Deaconess Hospital. The merger posed a host of challenges for the health-care staff, including a mandate to work with an external consultant on process redesign.

The surprise: Goldfarb found herself enjoying the work.

"The merger was really the turning point for me," she says. "That's when I became interested in health management and started getting myself mentally prepared for going back to school."

#### Intrigued by IT

After reviewing a number of MBA options, Goldfarb zeroed in on Bentley for its high-tech focus. "In health care, there's not a lot of opportunity to learn about information technology," she explains. "I was intrigued by IT, but I also felt like I was falling behind."

At Bentley, Goldfarb leaped ahead. Her first year in the Information Age MBA program included a group project for information-storage leader EMC. "I'd been interested in business process since Beth Israel," she says. "This was an excellent chance to learn more about it."

As part of the Business Processes course, the Bentley team analyzed EMC's internal request-tracking system for IT services. The task was especially complex because every department, from marketing to human resources, had its own IT group — and each operated differently.

"There were 12 people on the team, and we each became specialists in one area," Goldfarb explains. "I mapped certain processes, others did the cost-benefit analysis." In the end, the group recommended an off-the-shelf technology solution for improving the company's tracking system.

#### Confirming direction

Next came a summer internship as a financial analyst for Lifeline Systems, a \$97 million provider of personal emergency response systems. Goldfarb's final report,

presented to the Lifeline CEO, included electronic data mining, personal interviews, a profitability analysis, and an overall market assessment for the technology-based business.

"Bentley's core program in my first year prepared me well," she says. "I enjoyed the work, and at the end of the project I was confident that I was moving in the right direction by concentrating in finance."

Goldfarb further refined her technology skills as a research assistant for Assistant Professor of Finance Patrick C. Gregory. For this assignment, she learned her way around the college's Trading Room, to conduct background research for a project in risk management.

"It was a very valuable research opportunity," she says. "I had access to a whole new subject area I wouldn't have been exposed to otherwise."

By the time she began looking for a post-graduation job, Goldfarb had shifted from her original plan to work in health-care management. "I had made my transition to finance," she explains. "Someday, I may work in health care again, but now it's time to broaden my horizons."

#### Experience and ambition

The immediate landscape includes a position at General Dynamics. Though introduced to the company at a Bentley career fair, Goldfarb credits a classmate employed there for helping her land a job with the mammoth aerospace and defense contractor.

"I used the old-fashioned networking approach," she laughs. "I worked on a project with this classmate, so she knew my work style. It's easier to get into a company when someone who's already there can tell them you have a good work ethic."

Goldfarb works on the government side of the company's Network Systems Telecommunications division, as a senior specialist in finance. Having the relevant skills in business, finance and IT gave her an obvious edge with her new employer. Varied work experience and her ambition to switch careers, she says, were other factors that weighed in her favor.

"You can transform yourself. There are employers who desire and respect people who can take on diverse challenges. They value the perspectives you get from working in different environments."



## LONG SHOTS AND SURE THINGS Market lessons learned from lotteries

**Lotteries** may seem an unusual topic for scholarly research, but not to economist David Gulley. The Powerball and the Nasdaq have more in common than you might think.

"Both are financial situations with uncertain outcomes," explains the associate professor, who joined the Bentley faculty in 1990. "The types of stocks investors are likely to buy depend on whether they're long-shot bettors — willing to tolerate more risk for potential higher payouts — or want more of a sure thing. Studying lotteries sheds light on the performance of financial markets by allowing us to more closely examine people's preference and tolerance for risk."

Gulley has studied lotteries for the past 13 years. He calls them "neat experiments in how people make choices" in the face of uncertainty. "They're useful for economists, who typically aren't able to conduct real-world experiments."

### Calculated risks

With a BA from Alma College, Gulley made his entrée into the world of gaming while completing his master's degree and doctorate in economics at the University of Kentucky. There, in the heart of horse country, he set to comparing the behavior of people betting on horse races to those playing state-run lotteries. The study was his first piece of published scholarship.

Though horse racing is a revered pastime in Kentucky, government-sponsored lotteries have no shortage of detractors — in the Bluegrass State and elsewhere. Critics say that gaming amounts to a tax levied upon those least able to pay, who do not understand the risks involved. Not so, says Gulley.

"The data provide evidence that people do understand how the games operate. Though they may not use statistical analysis to determine the odds of winning, bettors may use rules of thumb to come up with, on

average, the right answers. Those who play realize how much they win is determined by how many people play. When jackpots increase, the games attract more players, who are reacting rationally to the expectation of higher returns. These are long-shot players: They know the odds of winning are low, but the potential payout is life changing."

Gulley's research on gaming has appeared in scholarly publications such as the *National Tax Journal*, *Applied Economics* and *Economic Inquiry*. In 2001, Bentley recognized his achievements in teaching and scholarship with a three-year appointment as Gibbons Professor.

In this post, Gulley is conducting research on money demand and nominal debt, and forecasting volatility over different time horizons. He's also exploring issues related to Federal Reserve Bank.

**"STUDYING LOTTERIES... ALLOWS US TO MORE CLOSELY EXAMINE PEOPLE'S PREFERENCE AND TOLERANCE FOR RISK."**

### Perfect opportunity

Still, he keeps his hand in the lottery. Since 1997, Gulley has been a research fellow for the Centre for Gambling and Commercial Gaming at the University of Salford in Great Britain. There, he and British colleagues David Forrest and Robert Simmons are studying that country's national lottery, launched in 1994 ("a perfect research opportunity, because the government has collected data since the beginning").

He and his U.K. counterparts have used that data to build statistical models that predict sales of lottery tickets, based on the size of the jackpot and the particular day the biweekly drawing is held (Saturday usually draws more bettors than Wednesday). Gulley reports that the model's forecast of sales is usually on target, within an acceptable margin of error.



Though gambling is far more prevalent in England than in the United States, Gulley has found that bettors in the two countries behave similarly.

"All gambling involves three factors: payoff, that is, what will you get if you win; odds, the chances of winning; and other players, whose behavior influences the payoff and, sometimes, the odds," he explains. "In both countries, different games appeal to different types of gamblers."

### A game for everyone

Recognizing gamblers' varying degrees of risk tolerance, states like Massachusetts market different games to appeal to people all along the continuum — from scratch tickets to Mega Millions, the latter of which draws participants from Massachusetts and eight other states.

"The jackpots can become massive, but the odds of winning are astronomical," says Gulley. "Games like Mass Cash and Megabucks are much easier to win, but the jackpots are also much smaller."

Does an expertise in games of chance offer an advantage in placing his own (admittedly rare) lottery bets? Gulley laughs. "It gives me absolutely no insight into winning numbers."

◆ — MKS

## A LOOK AT E-LECTIONS The Web as a tool for political communication

**The World Wide Web** may be the single most significant development in political marketing since television. The new technology promises to be an equalizer, leveling the publicity playing field for incumbents, mainstream challengers and third-party candidates alike.

But it hasn't happened yet, says Professor of Government Christine B. Williams.

Williams examined politics, marketing and computer technology in "The 2000 E-Campaign for Senate." The study, by Williams, Bentley marketing professor Andrew Aylesworth, and former Bentley colleague Kenneth J. Chapman, scrutinized the official web sites of 111 candidates who ran for the U.S. Senate in 2000.

### Rating the sites

The trio started with a comprehensive content analysis, to rate the web sites on features such as political content, campaign support and services, and design elements such as navigability and interactivity. Then they surveyed web masters of the sites to learn how campaign organizations managed their web sites and made strategic decisions about their use.

Slated to appear in the March 2003 issue of the *Journal of Political Marketing*, results show the Internet falling short of its potential for joining the needs of candidates and voters. The 2000 Senate races did use the Web more extensively than previous campaigns, but sites had few features or services directed toward the mass electorate.

### Sophistication gap

The Web as a political communication tool is a longtime interest for Christine Williams, who holds a BA from Miami University and an MA and PhD in political science from Indiana University. She also has examined the web sites of Fortune 100 companies

to analyze corporate response to the September 11 terrorist attacks; her current research branches out to "cyberadvocacy," that is, how corporations and nonprofit organizations use the Web to influence public debate on issues such as trade and taxation.

"As someone trained in democratic theory, I'm interested in whether the Web is improving public debate and the political process, and creating better campaigns," says the 17-year member of Bentley's faculty. While acknowledging that the Web has fundamentally changed political communication, she notes, "There's still a wide gap in the sophistication of third-party sites versus those of mainstream parties."

Surprisingly, given ongoing concerns about declining voter turnout, less than one-third of the sites in Williams's study provided any information on voter registration. Absent, too, were the mechanisms for interactivity and two-way communication that make web sites such a powerful marketing tool (think online polls, live chats, and games or contests). Many sites lacked even basic navigation tools, making it difficult for users to find desired information.

"The good news is that most of the web sites stayed positive," Williams notes. "Less than 20 percent of candidates used comparative or negative content. Of course, you have to remember that it took candidates more than a decade to run negative ads on television."

### Low incentive

While seeing a need for better content and presentation on candidate web sites, Williams and her study co-authors admit there's little incentive to make improvements. Currently, neither high traffic nor the right kind

of visitors — those willing to make significant campaign contributions — offer enough return on a candidate's investment of time and money.

"The average price tag of an open Senate seat is \$6 million," Williams reports. "Our own data, from a small sample of 19 web masters, indicated that between \$1,500 and \$130,000 was raised through online solicitation, with most contributions averaging between \$51 and \$100."

Until the Web becomes a true mass medium, she notes, television will continue to draw the lion's share of campaign budgets.

The modest level of investment leaves campaign web sites lacking a relationship-marketing strategy aimed at general voters. Such a strategy would create repeat "customers" for the services of candidates for public office and raise the level of political discussion.

"At their best," says Williams, "campaign web sites should educate and mobilize the electorate, and improve public debate and civic discourse."

Now, the Bentley professor has turned her attention to the 2002 election. With a grant from the Joan Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy at the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, Williams is repeating and extending her study of Senate campaign web sites to include web master interviews as well as visitor tracking and evaluation data. ◆ — MKS



**DEFINITELY DYNAMIC.** More breaking news is closer than ever on Bentley's web site. On the home page, click on "News and Events" for the latest word on campus happenings, scholarly research, faculty and staff newsmakers, community-related initiatives and more — all updated continuously. (Some top stories from mid-January: *U.S. News & World Report* rankings, a rise in the number of Bentley undergrads studying abroad, faculty research on ethics among business students.) There's also a month-by-month archive of college press releases, back to 1998.

Meanwhile, Bentley sports fans are cheering a makeover of the Athletics web site ([www.bentley.edu/athletics/index.cfm](http://www.bentley.edu/athletics/index.cfm)). Press releases, sports stories and game scores are all generated dynamically and posted in real-time. A pull-down menu delivers speedy, direct access to recent news, season schedules, game results, player rosters and other information for each of Bentley's 22 varsity teams. The integrated, up-to-the-minute site is fully on par with those at other nationally ranked institutions.

Next up: an Alumni web site that's more interactive and easier to use. Those who register can tap an online alumni directory, sign up to attend events, make a gift to the college, and more. Watch your mail for details of the site's projected launch in mid-winter.

## **BENTLEY COLLEGE**

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