

HIT THE FLOOR RUNNING

Honors Freshman Housing Option a Big Success

By **Melissa Clauss**

I want to preface this article by saying that I am not a cheesy person. I embrace cold truths and brutal honesty with open arms. But everyone has a soft spot — and for me, it is my residents on the Honors Floor.

Upon finding out that I was going to be the resident assistant (RA) for the Honors Floor, I have to say that, although I was excited, I was also nervous. It wasn't necessarily something that I had signed up for but rather an opportunity thrown at me, and I wasn't sure what to expect or, even more than that — what was expected of me. Now having been the RA of the first-ever Honors Floor, and even considering myself to be a part of the floor, I feel that the experience has truly shaped my life.

The Honors Floor is an interesting place. It's dynamic and different in ways that I can't necessarily explain . . . but it works. Being a part of the Honors Floor, you have this very basic understanding of what it means to be a hard-working student. Regardless of performance in classes or grades, you know that the focus is your studies. Beyond that, residents of the floor could be said to have little in common at first glance — coming

from different countries, backgrounds, interests — but that basic interest was enough to foster an amazing community of people.

As a floor, we've done some different programs and activities that have really helped with initiating floor bonding. In addition, these programs have addressed some of the needs of the floor. We started off with a brick-painting party to get to know each other and foster an "open-door" policy — to keep doors open, pop in for a conversation, and get to know each other better. Around midterms I hosted a Breakfast by Moonlight Midterm Edition where

I cooked for my residents as a stress-relief opportunity. We've also done things like going together to Honors Program sponsored events, the Activities Fair, a cookie-baking night, a résumé-review night, and a stress-relief session with peer advisers from



Melissa Clauss

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LEADING LADIES

Bentley Women Set the Bar in Financial Leadership

By Suzy Hallak

Bentley University actively advocates advancement of women in business through scholarships, student organizations, and various programs organized by the Center for Women and Business.



Suzy Hallak

All of these initiatives provide motivated female business students with the resources to facilitate success in the corporate world. This past year, an impressive record of seven Bentley women from the class of 2014 have been accepted to the Financial Leadership Program (FLP) at United Technologies Corporation (UTC), the Honors Program corporate partner.

The FLP entails four six-month

finance and accounting rotations around the United States, as well as two annual FLP training conferences. Liz Peterson, Evelyn Kobierowski, Christina Gangi, Alicia Papineau, Deanna Rousseau, Sarah Schott, and Lorraine McClellan (pictured below, in order, from left to right) are currently participating in the demanding and selective Financial Leadership Program and continue to exemplify women leadership, Bentley style.

These Bentley women majored in Managerial Economics, Finance, Accounting, and Economics–Finance during their undergraduate careers. The Liberal Studies Majors pursued by these ambitious females include Ethics and Social Responsibility, Global Perspectives, and Health and Industry. These Bentley programs gave them the opportunity to take rigorous courses, which shaped their analytical, quantitative and problem-solving skills in preparation for the UTC FLP. They were involved in various clubs and organizations, including the Greek Activities Council, Service–Learning, the Women’s Center, the Law Club, varsity and club sports teams, Bentley Investment Group, the Economics and Finance Society, Colleges Against Cancer, and the Honors Program. Rousseau, Gangi, Peterson, Schott, Lorraine, McClellan and Papineau were not only dedicated learners in the classroom, but out of the classroom as well. Their involvement in leadership roles on campus was significant, and they also added to their résumé many internship experiences before getting accepted to the competitive UTC FLP.

When asked about her involvement at Bentley and her experience in the FLP, McClellan mentioned that her

current manager is also a female graduate from Bentley, and two of the women in her specific group are also Bentley alumni. “We do have a pretty great presence here,” McClellan explains, adding that she is “passionate about both UTC and Bentley.” During her undergraduate career, McClellan played intramural sports and participated in service–learning, where she dedicated her time to the More Than Words program and the Low-Income Housing Project.

These women have utilized the skills they developed at Bentley to not only thrive, but to also learn and grow as much as possible in the UTC FLP. Papineau is currently in her first rotation in Ashland, Mass., where she has already seen the program’s impact on herself as a leader. She is now part of the UTC Women’s Finance Forum, which hosts speakers and many volunteer events, allowing her to network with women of all levels within finance. Papineau believes that “it is crucial, especially for women in business, to network and get their names out there” when attempting to work their way up within an organization. Throughout her work experience, Papineau has developed her analytical, communication and adaptability skills, which are all crucial for succeeding in the business world. The FLP has provided her with a diversified work experience, with her first role training her in Cost and

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THE REAL DEAL WITH GRAD SCHOOL

Life as a First-Year PhD Student

By Gerard Fischetti

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times,” opens Charles Dickens’s *A Tale of Two Cities*. A similar sentiment applies to life in a graduate program. This article aims to show you that there are real tangible benefits to continuing on the schooling escalator, as well as some downsides to consider. I began my first year of an economics PhD program in the fall of 2014 at University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, but my advice and observations apply equally to many programs and departments.

A PhD program has high barriers to entry. It’s quite an accomplishment to even get in, with most departments aiming for a cohort of around 15 students or less. Just to get in, you have to complete the following:

- Take the GRE.
- Spend weeks perfecting statements about your nascent “research interests.”
- Successfully annoy three professors to write recommendations.
- Play a months-long waiting game for a decision, visit schools, and make your decision.

Despite all these barriers, there is a lot of upside to spending five years intensely studying something meaningful. First of all, it is nice to be paid to go to school. My funding is contingent upon services I provide for the department such as being a teaching assistant and grader for a professor. I have a stipend that allows me to live a comfortable life, including, for example, shopping for groceries at Trader Joe’s instead of Walmart.

After taking some difficult “qualifying exams” and passing them, you stop taking classes and start doing research! It’s like your honors capstone but way more tedious, heartbreaking and triumphal. You get to push boundaries and present your work to people who care a lot about your field. Especially in economics but true of many disciplines, there will be a job waiting for you after you finish.

You will be constantly surrounded by super-smart people who enjoy discussing topics in your field. In my department, some of my classmates are married, some are turning 30, and some majored in philosophy or classics as undergrads. One worked for the U.S. Census Bureau before coming here, another started a band in L.A., and yet another did a Fulbright in Germany. Neat people!

Gerard Fischetti

On the other hand, this preponderance of neat people also invites seedlings of self-doubt and imposter syndrome. When you’re sitting next to a guy who graduated from Princeton and another with a master’s degree from Dartmouth, it’s hard not to be intimidated. At times I have felt that I was admitted by accident, that my spot must have been meant for someone else and a clerical error led to an acceptance letter being emailed to me. In the midst of all these smart people, I have also doubted my abilities and felt that one ought to be some kind of savant or child genius to make it through alive. No matter. There will always be someone smarter than you — this is as true in grad school as it is in real life. At least you have someone to ask for help when you can’t figure out homework problems. Many departments have collaborative environments, that can make you feel supported and validated.

Then, there are some annoyances to consider. Let’s face it: When you’ve just graduated college, five more years of school seems at the bottom of the list of good ideas. The most existential of existential crises may hit you in your first semester — seeing your Bentley friends on Wall Street making money while you turn your thermostat down a degree to

save on electric bills — this can make you jealous to an absurd degree. Just know that you are playing a game that has delayed gratification and your time will come.

You may feel lonely or isolated, being stuck with your cohort every day. There is no camaraderie that comes from living in halls or joining a new club. By all accounts, your job is school and yes, the work will always follow you home. You will become bogged down by the seemingly endless amounts of work and the steep learning curve. But if you came to grad school with strong intentions of being a researcher, your motivation

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SURVEYING THE SUGARSCAPE

My Leap of Faith into Agent-Based Modeling

By *Katie Vadakin*

Class registration is something every college student inevitably stresses about for weeks beforehand. Current students know to be realistic going into it, recognizing that all the classes one might like to take may not necessarily be the ones that are available that term.



Katie Vadakin

Charles Hadlock

However, as a freshman getting ready to register for classes for the very first time, I had no idea what I was signing myself up for. After a recommendation from a math professor, I found myself enrolled in MA 402, an honors math seminar entitled “Agent-based Modeling.” As fall semester approached, I began to prepare and learn more about the classes I would soon be taking. Immediately after reading the requirements and prerequisites, I emailed Professor Charles Hadlock, worried I was in over my head. He promptly responded and reassured me that I would be fully prepared for the material of the class, and encouraged me to remain enrolled.

The course taught agent-based modeling using a program called “Netlogo,” which is a newer computer modeling approach that involves individual interacting agents used to study the behavior of large complex systems. Throughout the class we

observed and researched different uses for agent-based modeling such as how traffic flows throughout a city or how a disease may spread within an area. From a business standpoint, we saw how this type of modeling can be used to research market trends, stock market strategies, and more. In the beginning of the course, we spent large amounts of time learning the programming language and modifying programs within the Netlogo model library. As a class, we created our own program that mimicked cars on a race track. This was one of the many fascinating models Netlogo can run. Learning the key concepts and formatting of this program was arguably the most frustrating aspect of the course. However, after a semester of collaborating with other students and with Professor Hadlock, navigating the program had become much easier.

Nearing the end of the course, our efforts were mostly focused on expanding a specific model. This process began with a basic agent-based model found in Northwestern University’s Netlogo model library, called sugarscape, representing wealth distribution in a society. After a series of changes and experiments, we added detail and functionality to the program to create an in-depth wealth distribution model where agents were able to not only earn wealth but also trade it with others. Using our expanded model, one can examine and explore aspects of wealth distribution through factors of age, fitness of population, location, inheritance and trade. All of these factors help determine how a society might function and distribute its wealth. The final project included writing an extensive paper on this expanded sugarscape model, including the results and analysis from an

original experiment each student was required to create using the expanded sugarscape.

This class was very challenging and required a large time commitment. This was true not only for me, a freshman, but for most of the students learning this programming technique for the first time as well. However, due to Professor Hadlock’s excellent teaching, I learned an immense amount on a subject that I had never even considered before. Not only do I now have useful knowledge of programming models that can be used to study the complex behavior of societies but I also have the experience of solving and analyzing complex problems. I would not have taken away as much as I did from this class had Professor Hadlock not been so willing to help with the tough assignments or assist me in developing fundamental skills I needed to succeed in the course, such as working with Microsoft Excel, basic statistics and analysis. The totality of the skills I learned in this class, as well as the experience I gained using Netlogo, will without a doubt be helpful to me in the future. I now have the possibility of implementing agent-based modeling into my senior capstone project, or simply bringing the knowledge of this modeling technique into my future career. The classroom structure and learning atmosphere in this course is something that most college freshmen do not have the chance to take part in. I am lucky to have taken this course my first semester at Bentley, because while it challenged me greatly, it also pushed me to succeed and work hard—something that I value as I start my college career.

Katie Vadakin '18 is undeclared.

HERE'S TO NEW BEGINNINGS

Desde el Corazón de Centroamérica to First Semester Freshman

By **Carlos Gutierrez**

I was born and raised in Honduras, a small Latin American country that is usually referred to as the “heart of Central America.” Even though I love Honduras, I have always known that I wanted to study in another country — I wanted to immerse myself in a culture different from my own and take advantage of any opportunities that might come my way. I was counting down the days until I could finally move into Bentley and begin what my mom told me would be “the best four years of your life.”

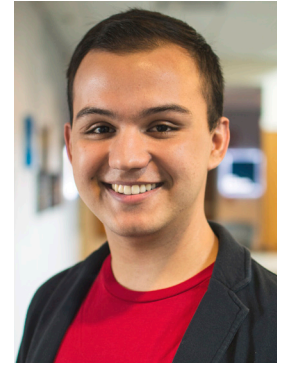
Now, if I am completely honest, I am no newbie to Bentley. I had the chance to visit campus a couple times when I was in high school since my older brother also went to Bentley. My brother Jose, who graduated in May of last year, was also in the Honors Program and throughout his four years at Bentley I was able to see firsthand everything that this institution has to offer and all the doors that were opened to him by him being an honors student. His hard work paid off, as he is now working for Morgan Stanley in New York City.

As an international student, coming to Bentley was somewhat overwhelming. This was my first time leaving my family, friends and culture behind, and I was anxious to see how I would be able to adapt to a new environment. Knowing that I would be a part of the Honors Program at Bentley excited me, since I would already be a part of an organization. As a result, it would be easier for me to get to know new people. I decided to apply to live on the Honors Floor, and my first group of friends here are all in the Honors Program. As a floor, we are always there for each other, and have become a close group. After all, we are all academically ambitious and share some of the same values; our mutual interests have made it easy for us to become friends. At the same time, we are all from different back-

grounds, and it is nice to see that I am not the only international student on my floor, which has made it easier for me to embrace Bentley as my second home.

So far, the thing I have enjoyed the most about the Honors Program is taking honors classes. I signed up for two of them during my first semester, and they have turned out to be my favorites. These classes had less than 20 students each, which made it easier for me to not only do well but also get to know my professors. Being in a class with honors students is always great since you will find that everyone there will share your passion for learning, and this makes the classroom experience better for everyone. I have a great variety of honors courses to choose from, and while these courses can be somewhat more challenging,

the hard work will pay off. I have signed up for another honors course my second semester, and I know it will be a good experience.



Carlos Gutierrez

Although I have only been here for one semester, I can tell that these next couple of years will most definitely be the best four years of my life. Gracias, Mom, you were right! Being able to be independent and make my own decisions was something that I needed. I have learned that I am 100 percent responsible for myself, and every decision has a consequence, be it good or bad. I have grown a lot since I got to Bentley this past September, and I genuinely feel like this place is making me a better person. My international student friends all agree that leaving home was a good decision, and making Bentley my new home, if only for a few years, was even better.

Carlos Gutierrez '18 is undeclared.



EXCELLENT LEADERS ARE ACTUALLY ‘GOOD ENOUGH’

The First in a Recurring Series on Leadership

By Aaron Nurick

I know what you must be thinking. Good enough? Is that the best you can do? To high-achieving students dedicated to excellence and perfection, and measured throughout their lives by grades and other accolades, good enough is more likely considered not enough, mediocre, or just getting by.

While that may be the conventional wisdom, good enough actually has a deeper and more profound meaning, and the idea goes to the heart of our earliest interpersonal relationships. In my book, *The Good Enough Manager: The Making of a GEM*, I draw on the psychological theory of the good enough mother (or parent). The parent creates a “facilitating” environment for her child, meeting all of his needs in the beginning and adapting her behavior, gradually allowing the child more autonomy and room to add something uniquely his own to the relationship within well-established and secure boundaries. By recognizing and accepting her natural limitations, allowing for mistakes and failures, and responding to her child’s inevitable frustrations with empathy, support and guidance, the parent enables the child to emerge as a more authentic individual with a stronger foundation for navigating future relationships in groups and organizations.

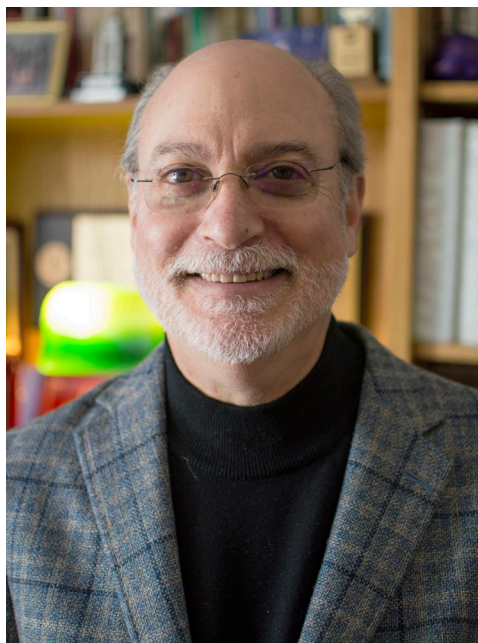
As Peter Bregman recently observed, there is a natural link between the behavior of parents and managers, who can also create facilitating environments in relation to their employees and co-workers. In an age of uncertainty and constant change, adaptive managers who create workplaces characterized by autonomy within well-communicated and managed performance expectations are very responsive to the demands and emotional undercurrents of the current business environment. I define a Good Enough Manager — or GEM — as one that:

- Is confident working with fluidity, complexity and uncertainty;
- Builds and maintains effective relationships by managing emotions and communicating clearly and genuinely (and encouraging the same in others);
- Facilitates autonomy, maturity, creativity and growth.

In my study, I asked people to describe and provide stories about their “best” and “worst” managers. Based on the ideas of more than 1,000 respondents, I concluded that the best managers shared many “good enough” qualities. They were seen as mentors and teachers, relationship builders, and models of integrity for their employees and co-workers while the worst managers were overwhelmingly described as micro-managers who stifled creativity and undermined these relationships. One person described his best boss as follows: “When my boss gave me tasks, he framed them by sharing a vision and goal. He did not give step-by-step instructions. Instead, he gave me the goal and set the guardrails — or boundaries. If I ever got close to a guardrail, he made it comfortable to approach him with questions. Instead of giving me the answer, he would ask more questions so that I could think up a solution myself. If I was performing fine (within the guardrails) my boss would trust me to execute on the vision or achieve the goal.”

In general, these GEMs were characterized as being emotionally authentic, tolerant of uncertainty, adaptive to change, and accepting of their own and others’ limitations and imperfections in the face of an ever-changing and turbulent environment. These managers also encouraged creative thinking and learning from inevitable mistakes and even failures. They were perceived as fair and honest in their dealings with others and remained a touchstone for their employees, long after the end of the formal reporting relationship.

One may ask, are these GEMs just special people or can one aspire to this kind of leadership? While many of these managers likely have some predispositions, their effectiveness is a combination of attitude and skill, much of which can be learned and



Aaron Nurick

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Health and Wellness. However, the real bonding comes from the everyday — trips to Seasons Dining Hall, catching up in the hallway, powering through some late-night cram sessions, singing a new catchy song in the hallway, or even dragging up to the library or classrooms in Smith to study together.

As far as my role goes, factors like respect and support are things that RAs try hard to accomplish but often find hard to achieve. But on the Honors Floor there is this constant reminder that respect is everything. People in the same boat tend to follow the same unwritten codes, so residents know that they need to be respectful in order to be respected. As far as loud music and obnoxious screaming? You'll never hear it on our floor (although some of my residents

will complain that I . . . the RA . . . have my music on too loud).

The other thing that surprises me about my floor is the role my residents play in supporting each other. As a community you can't realistically expect everyone to love everyone. But knowing that people have different things going on and different struggles in their lives, it is a given that anyone on the floor is there to support you without question. This kind of unconditional support is an amazing feature that I've never seen on any other floor, and I can honestly say that it has very little to do with me and almost everything to do with the residents.

Today, I am so thankful for my residents as they are a constant reminder of what college is about — having fun,

trying new things, and growing together with peers. In all of life's day-to-day challenges, I would say that they've helped me more than I've helped them. Not a day has gone by that they haven't made me smile, even when I've come back to the floor exasperated and exhausted. I am inspired by my residents to be better and do better in what I take on because of the way they push themselves to be better and do better. They demand the best of themselves and of each other, but also offer the support and respect necessary to do so. I am so, well, honored to be the RA of this Honors Floor, and helping to build and support a community within our honors community.

Melissa Clauss '16 is a Marketing major, and resident assistant for Honors Program housing.

LEADING LADIES *(Continued from page 2)*

General Accounting and her second in Financial Planning and Analysis. For her last two rotations, Papineau will have the opportunity to select which department she would like to work in. "Being able to get four

different experiences will make me well-rounded and help me as a leader later on. In order to help and lead people, you need to be able to understand what they are working on and what their process is,"

she explains. This opportunity has broadened her perspective, developed her skillset, and significantly expanded her network.

As a female Bentley student, it is wonderful to learn about these seven women's experiences with Bentley and the UTC FLP. Their level of ambition and dedication to succeeding in the workplace is incredibly inspiring for women who desire to make an impact on the business world. To have the Center for Women and Business as a resource for aspiring businesswomen, and knowing that corporations such as UTC actively and enthusiastically support women's advancement in the workplace, gives me confidence as I look ahead to entering the workplace next year.

Suzy Hallak '16 is a Finance major.



GRAD SCHOOL *(Continued from page 3)*

will sustain you when the going gets tough.

Grad school is a great place to acquire some difficult skills that you can't get anywhere else. Some of these skills seem too theoretical or pretentious, but they form a foundation of knowledge that all academics in your field share.

You'll have to find ways to make your time in grad school a meaningful experience. For me, this has meant creating a gym routine, going to a public library to take out books for pleasure reading, and exploring the great town I now live in. I hope you'll consider how a PhD can buy you a rewarding lifestyle and a fulfilling career.

Gerard R. Fischetti '14 was a Managerial Economics major, and UTC student research fellow.

EXCELLENT LEADERS *(Continued from page 6)*

practiced. I provide the following "Four C's" as a foundation for becoming a good enough manager and leader:

- **Capacity:** Building a reflective way of thinking based on the knowledge of one's emotional intelligence and understanding of oneself in a leadership role in relation to others.
- **Competence:** Applying interpersonal skills such as listening, communicating ideas and emotions, and then applying these skills in combination to engage others in solving problems, managing conflict and accomplishing the task in relation to organizational goals.
- **Character:** Mobilizing one's values and moral self in relationships and in a leadership role.
- **Commitment:** Connecting one's work with the larger community in a spirit of continuous learning.

As a professor of Interpersonal Relations in Management for more than 35 years, I have seen these dynamics play out in the classroom and on campus. Of course, we encourage our students to work hard, perform well, and accumulate high grades in order to position themselves well for the job market. But there is also a potential downside to this achievement mentality.

Some students, fearful of lowering their grade, refrain from taking risks such as speaking in class or taking on leadership positions in teams or organizations and thus may "achieve" more by a narrowly defined standard, but actually learn less. Some job recruiters recognize this and even ask job candidates to talk about a failure and what they learned from the experience during interviews.

It is very important for students to begin putting these four C's to work

during their undergraduate experience, especially developing the interpersonal and emotional capabilities that will enable them to take on challenges they will inevitably face in the workplace. As the world-renowned cellist Yo-Yo Ma once said, "Perfection is not very communicative. However when you subordinate your technique to the musical message, you get really involved. Then you can take risks. It doesn't matter if you fail. What does matter is that you tried."

Aaron J. Nurick is a professor of Management and Psychology at Bentley University, and has been at Bentley for 36 years. Another version of this article appears as *Good Enough Can Be Great*, Harvard Business Review blog network, August 12, 2011.



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