

**THE  
FACULTY-  
ALUMNI  
BOND**

RELATIONSHIPS  
SHAPED AT  
PACE OFTEN  
LAST A  
LIFETIME



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The faculty-

alumni  
bond

Relationships shaped at Pace  
often last a lifetime

BY CAITLIN KELLY

“

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FOR MANY STUDENTS, GRADUATION MEANS A FOND FAREWELL TO A WELL-LOVED CAMPUS, DEAR FRIENDS, AND FAVORITE PROFESSORS. BUT PACE'S SIZE AND COLLE-GIAL CULTURE, WHICH MANY GRATEFULLY DESCRIBE AS UNIQUE, KEEPS SUPPORTIVE PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SOME PROFESSORS AND THEIR FORMER STUDENTS ALIVE AND THRIVING—TO THEIR MUTUAL BENEFIT—FOR YEARS, EVEN DECADES. HERE ARE THE STORIES OF FOUR SUCH PARTNERSHIPS.

## Sharing a passion for global entrepreneurship

"I've gotten e-mails from him at three in the morning and wondered—'Does he ever sleep?'"

Students of Professor Bruce Bachenheimer, a high-energy serial entrepreneur who teaches global entrepreneurship, know that's a fairly common experience, says Rमित Mehta '03, a former student who has remained close to his former professor, even a decade after graduation.

Mehta arrived at Pace in 2001 to earn an MBA, and Bachenheimer was one of his professors. Both men, who share a passion for global adventures, had taken unusual and circuitous paths into the classroom where they met.

A trained architect, Mehta had worked for many years in Savannah, GA, before deciding he needed a totally new career, although he was unsure what his next step should be. He chose Pace because of its international focus. Mehta was born in Kenya and grew up in Tanzania, in East Africa, and hoped to use his contacts there for a future business, its exact nature yet to be determined.

Bachenheimer, a clinical professor of Management and director of entrepreneurship at the Lubin School of Business, had trod many successful paths before returning to Pace—where he received



his undergraduate business degree—to share his global business expertise. Among other things, he had worked for the Bank of Tokyo and Westpac, a major Australian bank, then lived aboard his 36-foot sailboat in the Caribbean for a few years. After that he started a teak-importing company based in Annapolis, MD, catering largely to fellow sailors. He attended business school himself at 40 in Australia.

All of which deeply impressed Mehta. "He was fresh off the boat. He's very involved with business. He's very fresh when it comes to content. That's what struck me," he says.

Their growing mutual respect deepened into friendship when Mehta started a specialized tour company in Tanzania. In 2007, four years after graduation, Mehta took a group including his former professor to the East African nation, introducing them to a wide variety of high-level contacts, including businessmen and government officials. He even organized several safaris.

Today, Mehta is the founder and owner of Immersion Journeys, a full-service destination management company that arranges private tours and awareness programs to East and Southern Africa and Ghana. He works with several corporate and academic institutions such as Harvard Business School, Yale School of Management, Pace University, Babson College, and The Africa Channel.

"I think that was the tipping point when we got to know one another as well as we did," recalls Mehta. "We bonded peer-to-

peer then, more than as professor-student." "Rमित was international and entrepreneurial," says Bachenheimer. "Part of the appeal was his international aspirations and interest."

The two even share a birthday, June 2 (albeit ten years apart), which they've celebrated together.

"Rमित is really detailed and committed to excellence," says Bachenheimer admiringly. "He's very focused on the quality of the experience his company provides and he's someone I know I can count on."

"Sometimes we'll meet, just he and I. I'll ask his thoughts and he'll ask mine," adds Bachenheimer.

The two men look forward to many more years of friendship. "He's definitely someone I would stay in touch with for the rest of my life," says Mehta. "He's my unpaid cheerleader. Whenever I have a problem I need some advice with, I know we can have a glass of wine and figure it out."

## A tough love approach for molding marketing students

For Christine Leone '12, who now works in marketing for New York Sports Club, studying with Lubin Clinical Professor of Marketing Paul Kurnit offered an

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unprecedented experience—getting her first grade that wasn't an A. (It was a B+.) She was also working harder, as Kurnit warned his students they would, than she had ever imagined possible.

“We'd be working on our projects until five in the morning, go home to shower and come right back at 7:00 a.m. to keep going,” she recalls. But Leone was eager for more, knowing the world of advertising and marketing would be just as demanding after graduation.

“He gets it. He knows what it takes. He understands the pressure,” says Leone gratefully. “He's the best professor ever.”

Kurnit has taught at Pace for 15 years, after running a 200-person advertising agency, Griffin Bacal Inc., which was later sold. Leone immediately impressed him, he says, “with her high energy and passion. She did a lot. She was a major contributor. Some students are good in one area or another, but Christine was really excellent at pulling it all together. She's an organizer and took the reins of production. She drank the Koal-Aid.”

Kurnit invites his most promising students to join Ad Team, his intense, focused practical sessions that demand from each participant all the skills and attitudes they'll need to succeed in the industry. After taking one of his classes, Leone was eager to join Ad Team. “He just had so much energy, so much knowledge, and so much creativity,” she says.

But Ad Team is not for the faint of heart, Kurnit says. “It takes students from unformed clay to fabulous sculpture.” The sculpting process, like anything involving

sharp instruments, is rarely smooth or easy. “I teach tough, and I teach tougher every year, because millennials are often distracted. They're not as disciplined as they need to be, or should be,” he says.

Hence the importance of students like Leone, who act as a necessary “irritant” to their peers, spurring them to the highest standards possible. Kurnit's students quickly learn to expect what he calls “love notes.” These are no classic *billets-doux*, but “notes” in the Hollywood sense—specific, no-nonsense demands for lagging students to step up their game.

Leone welcomed them.

“We'd been spoon-fed our entire lives, and he'd demand huge changes in our work. The notes would really call us out. But it made me a better performer and a better student and I'm grateful for that,” she says.

Leone, who attended a small private high school, is especially grateful she chose Pace, a place where professors “just genuinely care about us. There was nothing in high school like the relationships I had with my teachers at Pace. They're amazing people.”

“It's all about connecting with my students,” says Kurnit.

Leone now considers her former professor a personal friend. “He motivates you to be the best you can be.” She calls him for advice, and, when he offered her a lead to a recent job and prepped her for the interview, (which she aced, winning the job), she knew he would be there for her, as he always has been.

“He's seen me grow up.”

(left image)  
Professor  
Bruce Bachenheimer

(right image)  
Professor  
Paul Kurnit





Professor Paul Kurnit with students. "I teach tough," he says.

## Helping a quiet accounting student find his voice

He was quiet and shy, uncomfortable speaking up in class. But Lubin Accounting Professor Barbara Farrell, EdD, quickly saw—with 34 years experience in the classroom—that Nick Bueti '99 could have a terrific career in accounting.

First, however, she had to get her student to come out of his shell.

"You have to become more assertive," she told him.

Today—14 years after leaving Pace—Bueti is a partner with Ernst & Young LLP, in Stamford, CT, thriving in his accounting career.

"I went to a smaller high school with smaller classes, so that's what I was looking for when I chose Pace. I really wanted to have that connection, to know that professors would know me and I would know them," he says.

"When I met Barbara, I saw from day one the passion she had, not only for the students, but for her profession. That was really inspiring."

Farrell urged him to apply early for internships and suggested which firms would be the best fit for his personality

and skills. "She was really like an adviser. She really cared for her students and she knew her students really well, so she would match students to jobs," he recalls.

The two got to know one another personally thanks to Bueti's membership in Pace's Accounting Society. Members of the 40-year-old volunteer group bring in 50 different accounting professionals—from major firms, banks, the IRS, and even the FBI—to help students get a better feel for their chosen profession. Bueti still returns to campus frequently, even bringing 15 of his staff members, to meet with and mentor Farrell's current students.



(bottom left image)  
Professor Barbara Farrell

(right image)  
Professor Sister M.  
St. John Delany

In the five years of his Pace undergraduate work, Bueti did come out of his shell, largely thanks to Farrell's insistence he do public presentations and work on his speaking skills. "At first, I was a little apprehensive as it pushed me out of my comfort zone," he says. "But she warned me 'You're going to be on with all your clients all the time.' She was right. Everything we do is like that. These skills have proven very important.

"By the end, I was a completely different person."

Farrell also knows she can call on Bueti to coax students like him from their shells as well. "I can call Nick and say, 'I have a very quiet student like you once were. Will you meet with them one-on-one to prepare them for job interviews?' It's so helpful to have this chance with a professional currently working in the field."

Today, the two try to meet once every few months to grab a bite and share what's happening in their lives. "She's definitely become a friend," says Bueti.

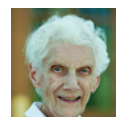
"I've kept this sort of relationship up with many students over the years," Farrell says. "It's so wonderful to see them go from being a young kid to a very successful professional you're just beaming about. You feel so proud. It's like being a parent.

"It's unique to Pace, keeping these relationships with alumni as strong as we do," she continues. "Many of us had lives before we came to Pace and we can talk about our real-life experiences. Students appreciate that. They like knowing someone cares enough about them, even after they've left."

## A gifted teacher of teachers

Students of Sister M. St. John Delany, PhD, associate professor of Education and director of the Center for Literacy Enrichment, know they're meeting someone

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special, as her reputation precedes her.

"We always heard she was the best," says former student Jan Cheluget (née Kutscher) '11, "and from the moment we met, I knew she was. When we all met her, we knew there was something special about her. You'd do anything to get into her class because she makes you feel so welcome. She just makes you want to be a better educator. What I liked about her classes was that they were really hands-on with lots of engagement."

Almost two years after leaving Sr. Delany's classroom, "I still use her readings today," Cheluget says.

The two remain close, seeing one another a few times a week, as Cheluget now tutors Sr. Delany's students.

"When people ask me if they can tutor, I ask 'Are you consistent, responsive, and knowledgeable?'" says Sr. Delany. "I need people like Jan who are very on top of things. She's very able to handle situations." Sr. Delany says she saw that in Cheluget from the start. "She was a very mature young lady, a very smart girl. She has a presence about her."

Sr. Delany sets a high bar, she readily admits. But her passion for teaching, and connecting with her students, remains undimmed. "I love them to death."

Pace students have a rare and precious asset in these ongoing friendships—when they compare notes with friends who've attended other universities, even small ones, their tight bonds with faculty sometimes provoke envy.

For the professors who keep committing their lives and talents to their students, for years after graduation, it's who they are and what they have chosen to do. "I'm in the life-changing business," says Kurnit.

*Caitlin Kelly is a Westchester County, New York-based writer, and frequent contributor to The New York Times Sunday Business section. Her books include Mailed: My Unintentional Career in Retail (Portfolio Trade).*