

Brandeis University



Graduate School of  
International Economics  
and Finance

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# Newsletter

## A TALK WITH MBAi PROGRAM DIRECTOR BEN GOMES-CASSERES

Director of the Master of Business Administration International (MBAi) program, **Ben Gomes-Casseres** is ideally qualified for the job. A 1976 Brandeis graduate, he returned to campus four years ago after a 20-year detour that included an MPA in Economic Development from Princeton, three years evaluating private sector projects for the International Finance Corporation of the World Bank and a DBA in International Business from the Harvard Business School, where he also taught for ten years. Along the way, he has produced a formidable body of work on global competition and cross-border alliances and has consulted for numerous companies, including BellSouth, Sun Microsystems, Abbott Laboratories and other high-tech firms. He spoke with Newsletter editor Dan Lawrence about Brandeis and the MBAi program.

### *What brought you back to Brandeis after all these years?*

More than any other place I have studied or taught, Brandeis offers excellence in a user-friendly package. By that I mean it has the world-class faculty, resources and facilities of a major university but without the bureaucratic boundaries. The classes are small, the teachers are accessible and the quality of education is high. In starting the MBAi program, we are following in the Brandeis tradition of striking out in new directions, of going a bit against the mainstream, but never at the expense of excellence. From a personal point of view, when I saw the opportunity to help provide the next generation of global managers with the analytic framework and cross-cultural managerial skills they will need to succeed in international markets, how could I resist?



*MBAi students at the annual MBAi brunch, held at the home of Professor Gomes-Casseres.*

especially excited is the second annual Forum on Business, Ethics and Society (see page 4). We started this in response to student interest in exploring the tensions that sometimes develop between corporate and ethical goals. Last year's program with Aaron Feuerstein of Malden Mills, James Oliff from the Chicago Mercantile Exchange and Sissela Bok from Harvard was a great success. This year, we have Ben Cohen of Ben and Jerry's, Jeffrey Swartz of Timberland and Peter Kinder, president of a socially responsible investment firm.

***Tell me a little about the inaugural class of MBAi students.***

We have eight students from eight different countries in this year's

MBAi class. The Graduate School as a whole has attracted students with an unusually high degree of accomplishment, and this group is no exception. In addition to their academic accomplishments, the MBAi students bring extensive work experience to the program, from pioneering investment banking in Hungary's fixed income market, to managing environmental engineering projects in Turkey, to running a medical services firm in India. As a result, they come with a greater sensitivity to and interest in organizational issues. So much of what you get out of any educational experience depends on what you bring to it. This group brings a mature outlook, astute questions about practical management issues drawn from their own experiences,

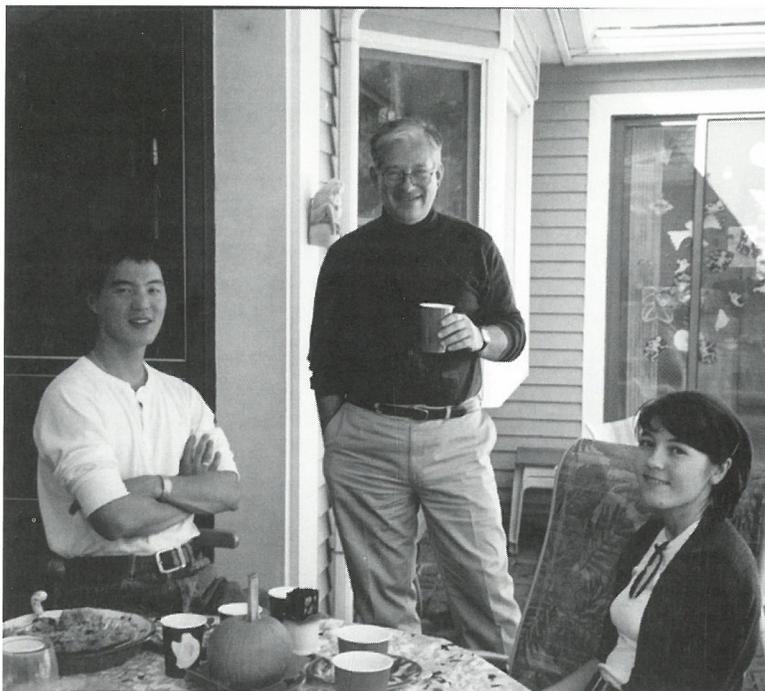
and a real dedication to working in multinational enterprises. They have been a delight to work with.

***So how would you characterize the ideal candidate for the MBAi?***

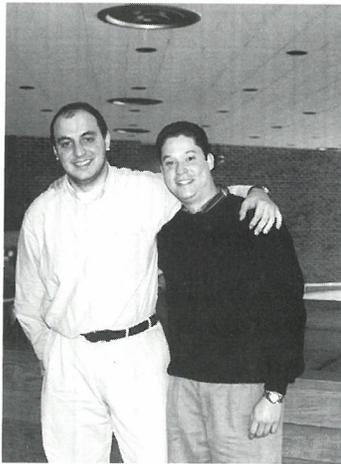
I don't think there is an ideal candidate. But I do think the MBAi program is ideal for the qualified candidate who is looking for advanced business management training with an international focus and an emphasis on finance. In fact, I would say the MBAi is the only program now available specifically geared to such a candidate.

***Where do you see the MBAi program going from here?***

We have started with a small group of top-notch students. Our intention is to grow the program slowly while maximizing excellence and facilitating interaction among the students, faculty and visiting experts. One of the real advantages of the MBAi program is that we are nimble enough to respond in a real and immediate way to the needs of our students. Within the parameters we've set up, they have the unique opportunity to tailor their course of study to their own ambitions. Whatever those ambitions may be, the skills and experience they gain here will give them a distinct advantage in doing business in the international arena.



*MBAi students Po Wang and Nihan Mert chat with Dean Peter Petri.*



*GSIEF students Rezo Kanovich and Luis Guerra*

win first prize," comments Luis, "but even more exciting was the opportunity to discuss infrastructure and operational issues with many of the bank's senior executives and to put into practice some of the skills we've learned at GSIEF."

### **TRAINING TOMORROW'S ENTREPRENEURS**

Most GSIEF graduates go to work for multi-national corporations, banks or international financial organizations. But an increasing minority have been striking out on their own. For current students who know they would like to follow that path, or those who would like the chance to find out if an entrepreneurial start-up is for them, GSIEF has developed a series of courses to help pave the way. The Entrepreneurship focus was developed by **Sundar Subramaniam** (Brandeis '88) who has

launched and taken public several Internet and software companies and was featured in a recent television program on the history of the Internet. Now taught and recently expanded by Professor **Chuck Reed**, also an experienced high-tech entrepreneur, the courses teach students how to design a new business (Entrepreneurial Ventures Management), how to manage the new enterprise successfully (Operating Entrepreneurial Ventures) and gives them hands-on experience developing and marketing a business plan (Entrepreneurial Finance and Venture Plans). To be sure, the path to starting one's own company is fraught with peril, but the US in general -- and the Boston area in particular -- is an excellent environment for those willing to try. Venture capital financing is available for good business ideas, and a hot IPO market promises rich rewards for those who succeed in creating a viable product or service. A successful launch often depends as much on how the entrepreneur markets the proposal as on the idea itself, and after the launch, growth and profits come only to those new businesses that are managed skillfully. Professor Reed's courses guide students through all these stages of the entrepreneurial process.

### **VENTURE CAPITALIST BACKS ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION**

A generous gift to GSIEF from Silicon Valley venture capitalist **Dr. Alex Barkas** (Brandeis '68) will be used to expand the Graduate School's Entrepreneurship focus curriculum, adding new classes to the Program's current offerings and increasing the hands-on involvement of successful entrepreneurs.

As managing partner of Prospect Venture Partners and, before that, general partner at the venture capital firm Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers, Dr. Barkas has built a career helping people convert leading-edge science into commercial opportunities. He helped found a number of biotechnology enterprises, consulted for Arthur D. Little and conducted research in virology, genetics and cell biology at the Whitehead Institute for Biological Research and Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center.



*Dean Peter Petri congratulates 1998 Feld Fellowship recipient Petko Bahovski.*

## ALUMNI UPDATES

With the increasing use of the World Wide Web and email, staff at GSIEF are getting exciting updates from Lemberg Program alumni. It is hard to keep up with the far-flung network of graduates, but we are pleased to provide the following news of alumni and their professional progress from all corners of the globe.

Starting with **Asia**, Mark Gerber '97, who we all remember as a native of Switzerland, has moved from Europe to New Jersey and most recently to Nanjing, China. He works for ABB Energy Ventures and is on assignment for six months in China helping to set up a \$1 billion 1200MW power plant.

Also from the Class of 1997, Viet Dinh Tuan has

returned home and has joined the World Bank Resident Mission in Vietnam as an Economist. This took place, however, after he worked for the Vietnam Fund Management Company during which he took trips to the British Virgin Islands. Also, John Lagman '98 has moved from Boston back to Singapore where he is now a FX trader for BankBoston.

From **Europe**, the Hungarian alumni contingent seems to be doing very well. Dezso Okanyi '92 is now Head of Treasury with Deutsche Bank Rt. in Budapest. Also in Budapest, Robert Stollinger '92 was recently promoted to Partner with KPMG Hungary, but the big move in the family came from Edina Perger Stollinger '92, who recently became the National Head of Retail Bank Sales for Budapest Bank.

From Stockholm, Monika Flodin Lunneryd '89 sent us updates. After eight years with Citibank in New York, Stockholm and Brussels, Monika has changed venues. She took ten months off, got engaged, and then joined Ericsson Hewlett Packard Telecommunications in Sweden. She travels around the world working to build businesses and originate deals with EHP's partners in the telecom industry.

Gustavo Arnaudo '95 is still working for the National Bank of Argentina, based in London, but is "on the road" leading a project restructuring the foreign branches of the bank for the next four-six months. Also moving about is Slava Smerkis '97. After getting married this past summer, he moved from Moscow and joined the London office of Salomon Smith Barney. He is now an investment banking Associate covering emerging markets in Central and Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and Africa.

Reporting in from **Latin America**, Monica Merino '96 is Metropolitan Manager for Bancomer in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. She sent several emails to classmates noting the humanitarian disaster and the relief effort underway in Honduras following



*Robin Nazarzadeh '98 and graduating MA student Joram Cukierman at the annual Networking Reception held at Brandeis House in New York.*

Hurricane Mitch. Talking to us from Peru, Ariel Winer '96 is now General Manager for the family-run toy business, Chicco. Ariel travels throughout Latin America engaging in the import/export business, and also managed to return to Waltham to see brother Michael Winer '99. Finally, Baruc Saez '97 is an Associate in Corporate Finance/M&A with ING Bank based in Buenos Aires, Argentina. However, Baruc recently resurfaced in New York where he is on an extended but temporary assignment.

Here in **North America**, Michael Ramer '89 reports in from the metro-New York area that life is going well. A proud father, Mike also announced the formation of his own executive search firm, Ramer Search Consultants, specializing in the placement of senior-level finance and marketing professionals. Any alumni looking for new positions in New York should call him first!

Stephanie Schear '90 is enjoying the high technology world of California. She is on a wild Internet ride, having founded an online pharmacy/drugstore called PlanetRx. Her start-up firm has been widely

covered in the press and is now in partnership with America Online. We await news of a successful IPO!

Barbara Clarke '91 continues her professional advancement in the field of economic consulting services. Having worked in four different offices for KPMG LLP, she made the move early this year to join the Boston transfer pricing practice at PricewaterhouseCoopers as Senior Manager. Her impact on recruiting for PWC has been immediate - not only did she hire fellow graduate Cathryn Turnbull Langlois '94 away from KPMG, but PricewaterhouseCoopers is on campus recruiting and may hire two or three members of the Class of '99 to join the practice in Boston!

Harry Palmin '93 made an entrepreneurial move when he left Wall Street after five and a half years to found a new pharmaceutical development firm. He is now based in Boston and is a Director and Vice President - Finance for Novelos Therapeutics, Inc., which is launching a platform technology of drugs that boost the immune system to combat disorders, cancers and infectious diseases. Karen Foster '94 reports from Chicago that she is still with Cargill Investor Services. However, she is now working on meeting the firm's margin

requirements with the various futures exchanges.

Joseph Omans '95 recently moved to Chicago where he is now trading in the OEX pit at the Chicago Board of Exchange. He says he trades completely in "butterfly spreads." Alex Shinada-Brand '96 is recently married, and now works in a new capacity for Mellon Bank in Boston. He has joined the International Asset Management business line and is working on a number of Mellon's joint venture operations in Europe, South America and Asia.

Alexandra Riley '96 has been on a whirlwind. She left her investment banking position with NationsBanc Montgomery Securities in San Francisco, spent three months traveling through the US and Europe, and moved to Park City, Utah to get involved in the US Olympic effort. She is now thrilled to be the Financial Analyst for Games Services for the Salt Lake Olympic Committee working on the 2002 Winter Olympics. Lexie also reports that she is back to competitive speedskating training and is writing a business plan for her own sports company.

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