



3-2012

## March 2012 Newsletter

Career Center, Illinois Wesleyan University

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# CAREER PROFILE

a look at life outside Illinois Wesleyan University

**Name: Carol Brandt**

**Class: 1978**

**Studied: Music Education**

**Current Position: Senior Vice  
President and Wealth Management**

**Advisor for Merrill Lynch**

On Feb. 25, the Council for IWU Women's keynote speaker, Carol Brandt had the following pieces of advice to offer college students.

## **1. Pick the right partner.**

"My business can often have long hours with clients, events, and dinners in the evening. At times, this can be stressful. Everyone needs a supportive partner who understands that. That does not necessarily mean a spouse. It can be a friend, your family, or even your dog. But keep your partner and family as a top priority and invest quality time into your relationships."

## **2. View both change and crisis as an opportunity.**

"Crisis can be utilized similarly to change. As many people know, getting into an argument with a friend or a spouse often leads to a stronger relationship than before. In the same way, resolving an issue in client relationships quickly and in a way that exceeds their expectations can sometimes result in a stronger relationship than if the issue never happened. During the market selloff in 2008, I proactively called clients to let them know I was watching over their accounts and was there to listen to concerns and answer questions."

## **3. Understand the power of networking.**

"I got my start in the business by networking within the bank I worked at. Some ways to do that include volunteering and joining boards for issues you have a passion for. For students, networking is critical when job hunting. Have a follow-up system after you meet a new contact. Send an email or give them a call to thank them for talking with you and ask them to reach out to you if there is anything you can do for them."

## **4. Recharge and disconnect on vacations and weekends.**

"When you have time off, put down the Blackberry. Volkswagen had complaints from employees that their work and home lives were becoming blurred. So they stopped sending emails to employees outside of their work hours to ensure they were spending time with their families. Keep up with your relationships with other people and form friendships both inside and outside of the workplace."

## **5. Dress for success.**

"Ask yourself, 'How do you want to be perceived? What is your personal brand?' For me, my brand is successful, professional, and conservative, which applies to my appearance, office, marketing materials, and proposals. When clients come to my office, I want them to feel very special. For students, appearance is incredibly important when interviewing. If there is any question in your mind if an outfit is appropriate, it is probably not."

## **6. Learn how to say no.**

"This can be challenging for some people. If you don't have time or can't give a task your best effort, it is best to decline. You don't have to give a reason. Just say you are unable to help out at this time. If you spread yourself too thin, you won't do well in any of your endeavors."

## **7. Ask for what you want, and learn to negotiate.**

"Use decisive language. People often say things like 'Hopefully, we'll be successful' and 'I'm trying to lose five pounds.' The word 'try' lacks determination and commitment. It suggests you may not reach your goal."

## **8. Don't reinvent the wheel.**

"Borrow best practices from others. Many of the life lessons I am talking about were learned from observing or talking with other people. There are many ways to adapt others' ideas into



your own work. I did not create my business model from scratch, for example. I worked with an executive coach who provided input, and then I implemented the decisions."

## **9. Don't sweat the small stuff.**

"If you're having difficulties with a co-worker or a situation, it is important not to let it get to you. I have learned to put day-to-day problems or unpleasantness into perspective by asking myself, 'Will this really matter a year from now?' Most of the time, it won't."

## **10. Time is money.**

"Your time is valuable, and it always seems like there are not enough hours in the day. There are many ways to make yourself more efficient. For me, I delegate everything possible. I also turned off my email pop-up alerts and only check my email a couple times a day. My coach told me it takes 15 minutes to re-focus on a task after being interrupted."

*Carol Brandt was named to Barron's Top 100 Women Advisors and Barron's Top 1000 Financial Advisors for the past three years, and Registered Rep T's "Top 50 Wirehouse Women in 2011." Brandt holds a Bachelor of Music Education from IWU and an MBA in Finance from DePaul.*

# CAREER CONNECTIONS

a newsletter from the hart career center

March 2012

## Mar. 21st Speaker Challenges Students to Pursue Dream Job

For the majority of my childhood, my dream job was to be a singer/actress/writer/dancer/lawyer. Yes, that is exactly how I described it. But as I grew up and realized there were other jobs out there besides the ones I saw on TV, my concept of a future career changed. With that change, the idea of a “dream job” seemed a little starry-eyed. But in his upcoming on-campus talk, “6 Simple Steps to Get Your Dream Job,” author and keynote speaker, Pete Leibman will explain how that ideal career can go from a dream to a reality.

When asked about their dream jobs, many IWU students know exactly what to say:

**“My dream job is performing at Steppenwolf Theatre Company and becoming a member of the ensemble.”**

– Antonio Gracias ‘12

**“I hope to be the campaign manager for a Democratic presidential candidate.”** – Brexton Isaacs ‘15

**“I want to anthropologically study a library in order to help design and redesign libraries and then work in it as a librarian.”** – Stephanie Pierson ‘13

**“I want to write a best-selling novel that helps bring about an understanding of universal humanity.”** – Katie Sill ‘12

**“My dream job is to be the chief archivist at the Walt Disney Archives.”** – Casey Plach ‘15

But when asked about how to pursue that dream job, the level of confidence is not always the same. For many, these careers seem far-off or, in some cases, unattainable.

“I think I could have my dream job, but it’s somewhat of an emerging field,” Pierson said. “In the same light, there is definitely a need and use for that kind of work, and I would love to do it.”

“I think I can get my dream job because I have worked at Steppenwolf before and know some people there,” Gracias said. “But getting casted there is a whole different story.”

To Leibman, these dream careers do not have to be viewed that way. In his book, “I Got My Dream Job and So Can You,” he explains why.

“Despite being told it was impossible, I got my dream job right out of college, working as an executive for an NBA franchise,” Leibman said. “At that time, I was only 21 years old, and I didn’t even know how to knot my own tie. So if I can get my dream job, so can you.”

According to his website, less than two years after being hired, Leibman created The Washington Wizards’ Sports Careers Day and was promoted into management for the NBA’s Washington Wizards at the age of 23. He then managed and trained entry-level



Image courtesy of The Daily Beast

staff while being ranked as the franchise’s #1 Salesperson of the Year for three straight seasons.

In his book and at campus events, Leibman coaches students through how to turn career ideas into concrete steps toward advancement. While it may seem like a simple way to achieve a dream, Leibman insists that it was not easy.

“None of the strategies I teach job-seekers came easily to me,” he said in his blog, “whether it was how to get clear on what you want from your career, how to present yourself to employers, how to approach networking, how to use social media during your job search, how to approach interviewing, and so on. I was just a regular guy who worked hard and stumbled onto a simple system that you can follow to get your dream job, too.”

**Pete Leibman will present his talk on Wednesday, March 21 at 7:00 p.m. in the Hansen Student Center.** The first 50 students at the door will receive a free copy of Leibman’s book. For more information, visit his website at [www.idealizenow.com](http://www.idealizenow.com)

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IWU Fulbright Scholars share their stories!

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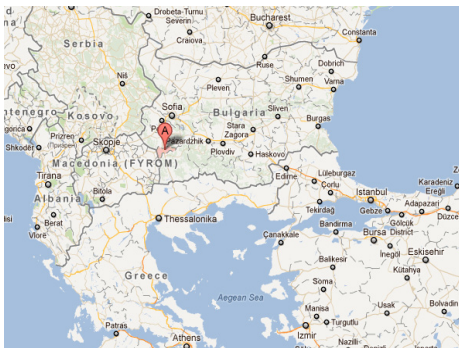
Tell us about your internship and win free dinner!



# Where in the World are the IWU Fulbright Scholars?

Last year, three IWU alums received the coveted Fulbright Scholarship, allowing them to take their skills and passions abroad. Created by U.S. Sen. J. William Fulbright in 1945, the program encourages mutual understanding between people of the United States and other countries of the world. More than 100,000 Americans have studied, taught or researched abroad with the program. Now that they are well into the 10-month program, let's check in and see what our alums have been up to!

## Emily Coles '11



### What did you study while at IWU?

I was a double major in international studies with a diplomatic concentration and French.

### What are you currently doing with your Fulbright Scholarship?

I am an English Teaching Assistant in Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria. I am working for Acad. Lyudmil Stoyanov, the foreign language high school for the region. I teach grades 8 through 12. The purpose of the program is to encourage cultural exchange and to introduce American styles of teaching in the classroom, such as strengthening critical thinking skills and cultivating creativity. This is particularly challenging in Bulgaria because of educational traditions and the fact that students struggle to express themselves.

### What made you want to apply for this?

I wanted to return to Eastern Europe. In 2010, I spent three months in Bosnia-Herzegovina, researching and studying the education sector. I knew

about the problems that confront many countries in the region, and I wanted to return in a teaching capacity to address some of the issues.

### What has been your most memorable experience so far?

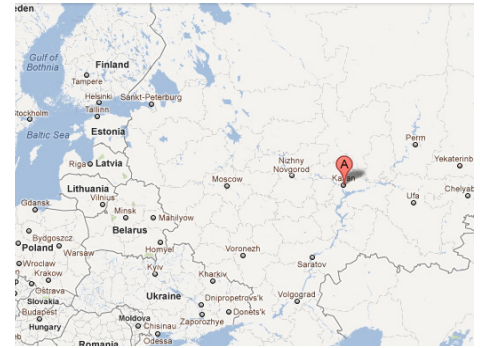
There have been so many! I guess the most memorable was when my 8th graders surprised my mother and me with a celebration of all things Bulgarian. My mother was visiting, and I invited her to be a guest in the classroom. The kids had got together and prepared about 10 traditional Bulgarian dishes and gave short presentations about each dish. They also taught us how to dance. I was so impressed by their initiative. They also surprised me before Christmas with a beautiful reenactment of how they celebrate Christmas Eve. The grandmothers of several students knitted me various things. It was such a rewarding moment and really showed that I was getting through to the students and that we had developed a strong relationship.

### What are you hoping to do in the future after this experience is over?

I will be moving to Nairobi in July. I just secured an internship with the Danish Refugee Council there. I will be leading a research project on Somali refugee youth. I am very excited, as it will involve extended trips to refugee camps throughout Kenya, Ethiopia, and possibly Yemen. I will be attending the London School of Economics in the fall for a year-long Master's program. I hope to return to the field of refugee studies and human rights post-graduation.

### What advice would you give to students hoping to pursue this scholarship or one similar to it?

Go for it! It is an incredible opportunity. Don't be apprehensive about leaving the bubble. You won't regret taking the leap and the experience will be truly life changing. If you are interested in applying feel free to contact me with questions.



## Geoffrey Grimm '11

### What did you study while at IWU?

I was an anthropology major and Russian language and literature minor. I also studied Spanish quite a bit.

### What are you currently doing with your Fulbright Scholarship?

I have a Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship Grant so I am currently teaching language and culture at a local university in Kazan. I also work with school children and hold a movie club at the local American Center, which is open to anyone. The program's aim is to promote cultural understanding between American Fulbright fellows and the Russian university students we interact with. I currently have six of my own classes as well as two clubs. We have a variety of activities and discussions that explore American culture and promote English learning through literature, film, and a variety of ESL resources.

### What made you want to apply for this?

As an anthropology major and someone who focused on sociolinguistic studies, I have always been intrigued by the interaction of language and culture. The Grant provides me with the opportunity to share my enthusiasm for languages with others while also giving me the chance to surround myself with a new language and culture. Most of my students have never met an American before so they have not had the chance to hear different viewpoints. Nor have they had the chance to share their own ideas and views with others.

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### **What has been your most memorable experience so far?**

Every Thursday, I work at a school with children from age 8 to 15, and the week of Valentine's Day, they told me they had something for me! The students had painted me a giant Valentine's heart that said, "Geoff, be our valentine! With love, School No. 8." It was very sweet of them and made my week! I had no shame carrying that wonderful memory home.

### **What are you hoping to do in the future after this experience is over?**

After this, I will be applying to Ph.D programs at a few universities, focusing on linguistic anthropology and neuro-anthropology. Before that time, I will be spending the year in Brazil with my girlfriend and continuing my studies in Spanish and Russian. Beyond that, well, who knows?

### **What advice would you give to students hoping to pursue this scholarship or one similar to it?**

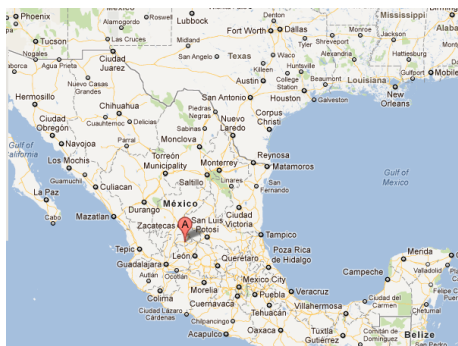
Apply! The first step to winning anything is to actually go for it. Don't psych yourself out of trying. After that, use the wonderful resources that IWU has provided for you. I remember for Fulbright, we had a committee that assisted with essays and interviews. Professor Balina worked with me extensively to prepare me for my Russian interview. We have a great staff and faculty, and they can help. It is always a good idea to have others read your grant statements and get advice from people who have already been awarded that grant.

### **Interested in applying for the Fulbright Scholarship?**

Go to  
<http://us.fulbrightonline.org>  
or talk to IWU faculty sponsor,  
Dr. Christina Isabelli for more  
information.

The deadline for IWU  
applications is in September.

## **Jason Roeschley '11**



### **What did you study while at IWU?**

I was a Spanish major and a History minor.

### **What are you currently doing with your Fulbright Scholarship?**

I applied for the Fulbright English Teaching Assistant (ETA) Program so I'm an ETA. I work at the Universidad Autónoma de Aguascalientes in Aguascalientes, Mexico. I give conversation clubs in English, presentations about the United States and the English language, and I also do activities related to grammar and vocabulary in English classes.

### **What made you want to apply for this?**

To be honest, I didn't enjoy my study abroad experience in Mexico in 2009 as much as I could have. So I wanted another shot at living in Mexico. This time, I'm having a wonderful experience, and I'm planning on living here after I get my Master's in the U.S. I'm also interested in teaching English as a foreign language.

### **What has been your most memorable experience so far?**

I've made a great network of friends who include people from many different countries, including Mexico, Paraguay, Scotland, England, France, and Japan. That has been very interesting.

### **What are you hoping to do in the future after this experience is over?**

I will get a Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults (CELTA) in Chicago this summer and then a Master's in Spanish with a concentration in linguistics at ISU. I was surprised when the director of a very nice language institute in my city told me in a conversation that he would hire me as soon as

I had a CELTA. If you're interested in teaching English around the world or travelling, getting a CELTA opens many good doors. After that, I plan to return to Aguascalientes indefinitely to teach English.

### **What advice would you give to students hoping to pursue this scholarship or one similar to it?**

I began the application process in about June of 2009 and was informed of the results in April 2010 after a campus interview and a Skype interview with the Commission in Mexico. So it's a pretty long, tough process. But if you don't apply, there's a 100 percent chance you won't receive the scholarship.

For the Fulbright ETA, which is totally different from the research branch, experience in ESL is necessary or at least very helpful for many countries. There are more volunteer programs in ESL than one might realize, especially around Chicago and the suburbs. If you're interested in teaching English around the world, there are many options outside of academic scholarships, such as working at private language schools who are eager to hire native speakers with qualifications. Being a native speaker of English does not automatically allow you to teach English.

## **Do you have a summer or fall internship? Tell us about it!**

Turn an Internship  
Report in to the  
Career Center by April  
17th, and you will  
be registered to win  
a gift card to a local  
restaurant!

Check out <http://www.iwu.edu/ccenter> for  
more information.