First-year MBAs mean business at B2B Case Competition

Class of 2013 breaks through to Broad

Spartan Spouses & Significant Others (S3) create close community

...and more!
The class of 2013 hit the ground running this fall with a fast-paced week of activities that tested their mettle and prepared them for the year ahead.

“Breakthrough to Broad (B2B) Week gives students a good idea of what’s to come, from work load to expectations to what the MBA community is about,” says Maureen Hall, Director of the Full-Time MBA Program.

During the week of August 19 to 26, first-year MBAs took part in a whirlwind week of career services workshops, business etiquette training, speaker panels with corporate executives, and a high-intensity case competition.

First-year students met with second-year student mentors and broke into the small teams in which they’ll work throughout their first year. Teams are chosen to ensure maximum diversity based on gender, ethnicity, professional experience, as well as the results of individual personality assessments. This mimics the kind of teams MBA students will encounter in the workplace.

The week wasn’t all work and no play. A campus scavenger hunt gave the new crop of MBAs a chance to bond and explore MSU. A group outing to a Lansing Lugnuts baseball game and Buffalo Wild Wings was a welcome reward for the week of adjusting to MBA life.

Another group of first-year MBAs had a bit more adjusting to do. The Full-Time MBA Program’s international cohort arrived at MSU for Bridge Week the week prior to B2B for a chance to get acclimated to the Broad College and to East Lansing.

Alena Kostyk arrived...
at Broad from Siberia, Russia. The former owner and CEO of a hostel in Russia, Kostyk is pursuing a concentration in marketing and hospitality business. “First I met only international students at this orientation program,” says Kostyk. “It was great to have this opportunity and participate in this program. First because of the useful workshops, and second, and most important, because of the opportunity to talk to a whole bunch of people who are in the same situation as you are, get some advice on adaptation, and simply learn where the nearest grocery shop is.”

Despite the rigor of the class load and overcoming cultural challenges, Kostyk says the highlight of her experience was being surrounded by great people. And she has some advice for future international students.

“Communicate with others as much as possible,” says Kostyk. “You stop feeling homesick and feel integrated to the community only when you take part in different social activities.”

Another international student, Dapot Sinaga, came to the Broad College from Indonesia. Prior to starting the MBA program, Sinaga worked as a Collection and Recovery Center manager at a bank in Palembang, Indonesia. He says his classmates and Broad faculty and staff made his transition easier. “As an international student, culture shock is my biggest challenge,” says Sinaga. “Broad, through its faculty and staff, assisted and supported me on getting aligned with the environment, in new situations, or even living in a new place.”

Sinaga says he attended as many social activities as he could, from tailgates to the MBA social to MBA Association activities. He also got acquainted with international students in other colleges at MSU through events sponsored by the Office of International Students and Scholars. “My experience so far is tough but excellent. Tough because the curriculum is very challenging and drives us to work hard. Excellent because the curriculum, as well as the faculty and staff, help me to improve my knowledge extensively.”

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First-year students in the Full-Time MBA Program dived head first into life at the Broad College with their first case competition during Breakthrough to Broad (B2B) Week this fall.

During B2B Week—August 19 through 26—Broad MBAs were assigned teams in which they work for the duration of their first year in the program. The teams immediately got down to business, preparing for their first case competition, held August 26 at the Henry Center for Executive Development at MSU.

Teams were placed into divisions and presented their cases to a small panel of judges that included representatives from Delta Airlines. The topic: Delta Airlines vs. Low-cost Carriers.

“I am always impressed by the way the first-year students are able to put together their presentations and recommendations in less than 24 hours without having taken any MBA classes yet,” says Akilah Ellis, manager of digital analytics for Delta and a Broad alumna who has been a B2B judge for three years. “What stands out to me is the way that the students are able to remain calm and poised as the judges throw very tough questions at them.”

The case competition didn’t just test Broad MBA students’ analytical skills. It also served as an important networking opportunity.

“I enjoy the opportunity...
to interact with the students and to listen to their approaches to the case,” says Ellis. “It also gives me the opportunity to keep an eye out for future Delta employees.”

The competition tested students’ performance under pressure and the teams didn’t fail to impress the judges. Patrick Callan, treasury manager for fuel management at Delta, who also is a Broad alumnus, says the team performances exceeded those of previous years’ competitions he judged.

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“This year in particular I was really impressed with the level of comfort the students had during their presentations,” says Callan. “You wouldn’t know they were in their first week. As they learn the content over the next two years to put behind their presentation skills, they will be well prepared.”

After the 19 teams presented to the judging panel in their division, the four top teams moved on to present their cases in front of their fellow MBA students and judges. The winning team made up of Yan Cao, Joel Cropsey, Emily Dickinson, Chris Kirwin, and Sahil Seshadri, demonstrated analytical prowess as well as a strong team dynamic.

“I look for innovative, unconventional recommendations that are backed up by data that makes sense,” says Ellis. “I also look for teams that come across as a united front. The members are not trying to show each other up.”

After the turn of the century, with the development of intra-school rivalries in football, schools found that they needed something beyond the available musical repertory for their partisans to sing and rally around. Out of this came a surge of original & distinctive school Fight Songs. Here at Michigan State College the Fighting Aggies (later to be rechristened The Spartans) settled upon a song. The words today are pretty much as they were when the author wrote them in 1914 or 1915 with the exception of the changes growing out of the school’s change in status from a College to a University (from M.A.C. to M.S.U.).

Who was the author of the MSU Fight song? Email Kate at goedde@bus.msu.edu with the correct answer and win a Spartan prize!
MEGAN BRODY

Hometown: Chicago, Illinois

Before Broad: directed the public relations and marketing department at McShane Companies, a construction and real estate company in Rosemont, Illinois.

Q: Why did you choose to pursue an MBA at Broad?
A: The program’s strong overall reputation, top-notch brand management curriculum, and dedicated, individualized career services were notably outstanding and lead me to my decision. Additionally, from the moment I was accepted, I felt welcomed by the school and received the personalized attention I required to make my decision.

Q: What is a typical day like? How do you spend your time?
A: A typical day at Broad is nothing short of a whirlwind. I begin class each morning at 8:30 a.m. that include a wide breadth of disciplines such as finance, leadership and teamwork, supply chain, and marketing. Classes are followed by a lunch break either in the MBA lounge or at Owen Hall. Lunch time offers the students a well-deserved break, in addition to the opportunity to form relationships and help each other with class work. After class, I either go to work as a Graduate Assistant in MSU’s University Relations department or make progress on the internship search before studying in the evenings and making sure I am prepared to do it again the following day.

Q: Are classes what you expected?
A: Classes are very challenging, especially since they cover such a wide range of disciplines. Many of us have strengths and weaknesses in particular areas, but all of the skills we are acquiring in each of these classes will be crucial to our success as business leaders.

Q: What surprised you when you started your program?
A: The admissions team at Broad did a wonderful job of staying in touch with the students from the moment we were admitted. This included requiring all incoming students to

Follow Megan’s journey at businessweek.com/business-schools.
take several online classes over the summer. This provided us with baseline knowledge for statistics, finance and accounting, in addition to re-familiarizing us with how to sit down and study.

**Q:** What kinds of events have you attended? How have you gotten to know other students?

**A:** There are many opportunities to get involved at Broad beyond the day-to-day classroom. I joined two organizations—the MBA Association and the MBA Marketing Association. I have gotten to know many students from these two organizations. The MBA Association brings speakers to campus, offers workshop opportunities that include the chance to meet business leaders of large companies, and is the proud sponsor of our football tailgates. The MBA Marketing Association is especially valuable for marketing students since many of the activities are geared toward our internship search and understanding how to apply the marketing frameworks to interview situations.

**Q:** You’re involved in Bloomberg Businessweek’s MBA Journals. How did that come about and what does that involve?

**A:** I applied to be a journal writer by sending in a sample essay. I was selected as one of only six students throughout the country for this honor. I will be journaling about my experiences as an MBA student at Michigan State University throughout the next two years.

**Q:** What do you plan to do after you receive your MBA?

**A:** I plan to continue working in the marketing field in a brand manager role. I am certain that the skills obtained as part of a graduate degree would allow me to make additional contributions to the overall success of any company I work for, particularly as business becomes more global and increasingly sophisticated. The Broad College of Business course work satisfies my unique career objectives, and the successful completion of this program will certainly play an integral role in my professional success.

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**Eli Broad**

(pronounced as in “road”) is a renowned business leader who built two Fortune 500 companies from the ground up over a five-decade career in business. He is the founder-chairman of both SunAmerica Inc. and KB Home (formerly Kaufman and Broad Home Corporation). The son of Lithuanian immigrants who settled in Detroit, Broad graduated with honors from Michigan State University in 1954 with a degree in accounting. In 1991, Eli Broad made what was at the time the largest gift commitment ever made to a public business school. His $20 million commitment to the Eli Broad College of Business and the Eli Broad Graduate School of Management—both renamed in his honor—was designed to help Michigan State University’s new full-time MBA program emerge as one of the nation’s top graduate management programs.

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Meet Eli & Edythe Broad
For Broad MBA students, summer is no time for rest and relaxation. Instead, you’ll find them hopping planes for foreign destinations as part of a study abroad program before taking part in an internship experience with a company.

Drew Mendrygal, a second-year MBA with a concentration in finance, traveled to Buenos Aires, Argentina and Rio De Janeiro, Brazil for a two-week summer study abroad program with the Broad College. The program offered a prime opportunity to witness how businesses in South America operate—one that may prove useful for Mendrygal, who will be working in a corporate finance position with Intel after he receives his MBA. “The trip itself was a blast,” says Mendrygal. “The academic part was helpful, and actually spending time down there to briefly experience the culture was also very good, but the best part for me was the bonding with classmates. There were a few who made the trip with us that I had not had a chance to spend a lot of time with all year, and I’m very glad I did. We really made some good friendships.”

Students spent time leading up to the trip researching companies they would visit so they could use their time abroad to delve into the specifics of the Latin American economy and what it’s like doing business there. Mendrygal says there’s no substitute for first-hand experience. “It exposed us to the challenges of conducting business in Argentina and Brazil,” says Mendrygal. “There are many resources you could tap to gain this knowledge, but I feel that actually being there and speaking directly with the people who work there was the most impactful.”

Mendrygal’s classmate Jenifer Fleury also took part in the South America program. The second-year student with a concentration in marketing and international business plans to work in the sporting goods or natural consumer products industry as a brand manager. “Study abroad helped me to see the macroeconomic issues...
that other countries face,” says Fleury. “As a future business executive, it is crucial to know how interconnected every country is and the types of challenges you may face when doing business with other international companies or even competing with them domestically. In my academic program, my study abroad experience has given me a reference point for many of my class discussions. After my MBA is completed, I’m sure this experience will continue to give me confidence, should I get assigned as an expat for my company.”

Full-Time MBA students also spend a portion of their summer interning at some of the nation’s top companies. Plenty of resources are available to students seeking internship opportunities, including the MBA Career Services office and the MSU career website MySpartanCareer.

Farris Bukhari, a second-year MBA student with a concentration in human resource management, spent the summer doing an internship with Proctor & Gamble in their prestige brands division in New York City. During his time there, Bukhari provided HR support for the Fekkai Haircare and DDF Skincare marketing team, for which he provided solutions to improve team effectiveness. One of his tasks was to create a structured recruitment plan for in-store beauty and fragrance sales personnel in conjunction with a third-party vendor.

“The MBA program provided me with a solid business background that I was able to leverage when I attended sales and marketing meetings with the brand teams,” says Bukhari. “I was able to pick up business issues immediately, and in some cases, point out areas of opportunity. I had apparently impressed some of the sales and operations personnel, as they initially thought I was a sales intern and couldn’t believe I was in HR.”

The experience paid off for Bukhari. He plans on returning to Proctor & Gamble upon graduation. He stresses the importance of getting internship experience to his fellow MBAs.

“Internships are the best way to get an idea of what your job will look like upon graduation, which is especially helpful for career-switchers,” says Bukhari. “Internships are also a great way to start building a professional network, both with employees in the company you worked for and with other interns within the company from other schools.”
One of the perks of being a Broad MBA student is attending Spartan football games on one of the most beautiful campuses in the nation. And win or lose, every home game offers the chance to relax, mingle, and network during MBA tailgates.

Located near Spartan Stadium on Red Cedar Road next to the old MAC power plant, each MBA tailgate is hosted by a corporate sponsor and brings together students, faculty, alumni, and corporate representatives.

Alicia Luzkow, a first-year MBA student from Haslett, Michigan, who also earned her bachelor’s in accounting from MSU, is a die-hard Spartan who attended a September tailgate hosted by Bosch.

“There’s a reason tailgate time is one of the best times of the year—it’s fun!” says Luzkow. “Whenever you get thousands of people all in one place, all in good spirits, and all sharing Spartan pride, you’re bound to have a blast.”

Luzkow says she enjoys the festive atmosphere and being able to get to know fellow students—and football fans—on a more personal level.

“People can bring their dogs, children, and significant others, so you get a chance to see your peers and professors in a new light,” says Luzkow. “Everyone should attend a tailgate. The atmosphere is fantastic, and it gives you a chance to connect with the MSU community in a special way.”

Arica Tomlinson, a
first-year MBA originally from Midland, Michigan, also attended the Bosch tailgate. Before entering the Full-Time MBA Program, she worked for four years in Chicago doing financial work at a large hospital. Tomlinson says she enjoys the opportunity to interact with recruiters and fellow students in a more personal atmosphere.

“Though many times the purpose of the tailgates was to expose the class to recruiters, I found that I learned about many new internship chances from my classmates and was able to relate to members of the other cohort whom I don’t usually attend classes with,” says Tomlinson.

Part of understanding the business process is understanding the support system that friends and families offer.”

Tomlinson says she impressed Bosch recruiters by showing off her throwing arm.

“During the Bosch tailgate, I was able to play a game of bean bags with a finance recruiter,” says Tomlinson. “This allowed me show my competitive nature and offer a different perspective of how to view recruiters.”
Many Broad MBA students balance academic responsibilities with their commitments to spouses, significant others, and children. While it’s not always easy, the Broad College strives to make MBA life easier and more fun for all involved with the Spartan Spouses and Significant Others (S3) Association.

This fall, the S3 Association hosted couples and families in the MBA program for a welcome dinner at the University Club on campus during the second week of classes. About 80 MBAs and significant others came out to enjoy an evening of networking, eating, and having fun. Those with children were offered a night of free childcare so they could spend the evening with their classmates.

Second-year MBA student Tyler Harker and his wife, Kari, attended the welcome dinner. The couple, originally from Utah, relocated to Michigan so Tyler could pursue his MBA at Broad and are familiar faces at S3 events. “Kari and I became involved with the S3 group immediately after moving to East Lansing,” says Harker. “We have loved getting to know the other couples in S3 and have formed a lot of great friendships. Kari has been able to meet many of my classmates through S3 events and has felt more a part of the program as a result. It was a great feeling for me to know that my spouse had an immediate group of friends after
moving to a new place.”

The association also connects first-year couples and families to those in the second year of the program, who can share their experiences and give advice.

“Kari and I both believe that it is important for spouses and significant others to get involved with MBA events because it has allowed us to spend more time together as a couple,” says Harker. “I really appreciate the family-friendly environment at Broad as a student. It has been a great opportunity for Kari to get involved with S3 as a co-director this year and be able to help the incoming S3 members have the same type of experience that we have had here at MSU.”

David Studley, a second-year student, and his wife, Stephanie, also attended the fall welcome dinner. The couple is originally from Tawas, Michigan, and lived in Philadelphia prior to coming to MSU. They say the S3 Association is less of a “support” group and more like a community of friends that brings together everyone in the MBA program.

During the welcome dinner, the S3 Association introduced a new social networking community where members can create profiles and keep up with one another and find resources and upcoming event information.

“Our website is a private, online, social community that you must be a member of to view our schedule of events, interest-based groups, forum discussion, local resources, and individual profiles,” says Stephanie. “There is even an option to chat with other online members. We hope it will continue to grow and evolve with the MBA community.”

Some of the S3 Association’s fall events included a trip to Uncle John’s Cider Mill, a ladies night out at the movie theatre, a book club gathering, and a Little Spartans Halloween Party.

“The MBA program becomes a huge part of your life during these two years,” says David. “Everything we do revolves around the MBA schedule. By being involved in MBA events, we are able to combine our personal lives and the MBA program in a way that has helped us develop friendships that will last well beyond these two years.”

Learn more about the S3 Association’s social networking group on Ning at s3-mba.ning.com.
Women in the Broad MBA Program now have more opportunities to advance their careers and network with MBA students and companies nationwide thanks to a new partnership with the Forté Foundation.

The Forté Foundation is a consortium of top U.S. corporations and business schools whose goal is to offer support and guidance to women pursuing leadership positions in business.

“We’re very excited to be one of the schools chosen by the Forté Foundation,” says Maureen Hall, director of the Full-Time MBA Program. “This gives female students the opportunity to interact with a very large group of women who want to see each other be successful in business.”

The Broad College was accepted as one of three partner schools in the nation—a testament to the program’s reputation and the quality of the student population.

Some of the benefits Broad MBA students have access to include webinars, conferences, career fairs, networking opportunities with member companies, as well as résumé posting tools. Broad students have free premium membership. Prospective students have the opportunity to apply for a fellowship which offers a lifetime membership.

“It can be difficult to be in a program that demands so much time and attention,” says Hall, noting that most business schools have a student population that is about 20-25 percent female. “Women face a number of factors like trying to start a family and the economy that add to that.”

The new partnership builds on the Broad College’s longstanding commitment to supporting its women MBAs. The Broad Women MBA Association offers a variety of opportunities and activities throughout the year, including hosting guest speakers on campus and going on treks, like a recent trip to Dow during which Broad students met with executives.

This year, the Broad College is the host of the annual meeting of the Committee of 200—an organization of top women business leaders with more than 400 members in more than 100 industries. All women in the MBA program have the opportunity to attend this milestone event.

“What we’re doing is grooming the next generation of women business leaders,” says Hall.

Learn more about the Forté Foundation at Fortefoundation.org.
Most Broad MBA students will have the chance to meet Jeff McNish, Director of MBA Career Services at the Broad College, at some point during their program. As a Broad alumnus and Michigan native who earned his MBA in 1999, McNish can relate especially well to the students with whom he works.

Originally from Royal Oak, Michigan, McNish worked as a consultant with a management and information technology firm before joining the Broad College. As the director of MBA Career Services, he and his team help students in Full-Time MBA, Weekend MBA, and MS in Supply Chain programs to achieve their career goals. The Career Services team also works with companies looking to recruit Broad talent and organizes and hosts career fairs and workshops throughout the year.

“Honestly, watching students achieve their goals is the best part of the job,” says McNish. “When a student lands their dream job or internship and they are really excited about the opportunity, it makes my day!”

McNish has three words of advice for first-year MBA students.

“Network, network, network,” says McNish. “Meeting and engaging others will definitely help you figure out your path. Learn about what others do and how others have progressed through their fields or careers.”

To second-year MBAs, McNish says, “Think about creating a plan to help you manage your career post-MBA. Staying current or fresh with your field is important. Figure out ways to maintain your knowledge.”

Away from the office, McNish spends much of his time with his wife, Amy, a fourth grade school teacher, their two children—Kalley, who is 2 years old, and 3-month-old Katelyn—and their golden retriever, Parker.

“Because I live in the Detroit area, a lot of my free time is consumed in the car,” says McNish, adding that he and his family take advantage of Michigan’s natural beauty and leave town whenever they get a chance. “Torch Lake, Michigan, is one of our favorite places. We try to go north once a month for swimming, boating, walks in the woods, or just relaxing without television or Internet.”

Learn more about MBA Career Services at mbacareers.broad.msu.edu.