

Alumni Focus

Intel Competes Successfully for ASU's Best



Alumni at Intel: **BOB AUER**, Embedded Controller, '98 Finance; **LINDSEY PUGH**, Finance Analyst, '07 Finance and '10 Executive MBA; **ANDREW BAIN**, Finance Manager, '02 Finance and Supply Chain Management; and **MICHELLE VANALLSBURG**, Financial Analyst, '05 Finance

Intel Corporation and the Finance Department have forged collaboration over more than a decade that has proven beneficial for both industry and education. Thanks to the proximity of the ASU campus to Intel manufacturing and R&D sites in Chandler and other Valley locations, finance students have a corporate laboratory in their backyard.

The relationship began in 1995, when Intel increased its manufacturing presence in the Phoenix area. That access has often given ASU students a leg up when Intel comes recruiting, says Bob Auer, embedded products controller for the Embedded & Communications Group, who earned an ASU Bachelor of Science degree in finance in 1998.

"We have close access to the faculty, the career services center and the Finance Advisory Board," he says.

Auer and Richard C. Kraemer Professor in Finance Michael Hertzler also created the ASU-Intel Honors Collaborative Thesis Program, now in its ninth year, in which small teams of junior and senior honors students are paired with coaches from Intel to construct a thesis on a real-world business problem. Not only have some of the projects

been adopted by industry, but the program also helps Intel identify outstanding students.

"It's a pool I've gone to from a hiring perspective," Auer says.

While recruiting from many business schools, Auer finds ASU students stack up "very competitively" against their peers. Currently Intel's Operations Finance department employs more than 70 ASU finance alums.

"We have been very pleased with ASU grads, with the skills they bring with them, their tenure – how long they stay with us, and their career progression," Auer says.

And those graduates are happy to be with Intel.

"Intel successfully competes for our best students against elite Wall Street employers who offer highly sought-after positions in financial services," says Finance Chair Jeffrey Coles. "How does Intel do it? Intel offers, through significant responsibility, opportunities for further learning and professional development. Anyone who is willing to take ownership of that responsibility is likely to have a productive and successful career with Intel," Coles says.

Alia Eccles, a 2009 finance graduate who

interned last summer with Intel, now enjoys a full-time job with the chip maker. She is a Budgets and Planning/Capital Analyst with the Corporate Quality Network part of the company, managing capital purchase, budget, forecasting and cost savings projects. "It's nice," she says. "In my role I'm able to do different jobs every day and challenge myself."

Intel has a system of rotations in which employees are encouraged to change jobs every 18 to 24 months. Eccles calls that well-suited to her work style. Even as a newcomer, she was neither bored nor overwhelmed and found her work stimulating.

During her internship, she was able to travel to Intel operations in New Mexico and Oregon. Future rotations could involve more travel, including trips to Malaysia or China.

Participation in the ASU-Intel thesis program helped pave the way for Eccles. Through that program, she says, "I was able to show people what I can do." Her thesis was on "Foreign Exchange Value at Risk," which explored foreign currency hedging and examined probabilities of outcomes for Intel's core business.

Though new to the company, Eccles envisions a career at Intel.

"I really like the idea of building a career with a specific company," she says. With Intel's rotation program, she says, "you develop skills that help the company and yourself."

After three and a half years at Intel, Michelle VanAllsburg still recalls the coursework that prepared her for a professional career. Finance professors brought to the classroom real-world examples of how to solve problems, how to analyze lease vs. buy scenarios and how to evaluate different depreciation schedules. She learned how to perform return on investment (ROI) and net present value (NPV) analyses.

Those skills have served her well in her job as an Embedded Cost and Inventory analyst. VanAllsburg earned an ASU Bachelor of Science degree in finance in 2005. She did a study program in Guadalajara, Mexico, with intense Spanish



At a recent presentation on campus, Intel's **BOB AUER**, '98 Finance, shared information about the numerous internship and job opportunities and considerable scope of responsibility Intel Corp. offers finance students and graduates.

language study, that gave her international experience and enhanced her resume. "Intel is global and they want people who are well-rounded," she says.

New recruits at Intel are offered significant workload responsibility.

VanAllsburg began her career managing a budget of \$3 billion. But to ensure success, she always had a network of veterans to support her, including managers and a buddy, or "integration guide."

Transitioning from college to industry was smooth, she says, crediting participation in W. P. Carey Business Ambassadors as well as the Financial Management Association. "That gave you exposure to different jobs in finance," she says.

For four and a half years, Michelle

Tinsley worked at Intel's largest campus, located in Hillsboro, Ore., after graduating from the University of Oregon. But when she decided to get her MBA at age 25, the local university told her she was too young. She found ASU's program highly ranked and came to Arizona in 1997. She received her MBA in 1999.

Tinsley stayed with Intel in Arizona and has now been with the company more than 17 years. She is now a controller for the Embedded & Communications group but has rotated through several jobs at the company, including stints in budgets and planning, revenue and cost analysis, in support of both manufacturing and P&L divisions. "It's been a good fit between the company and my personality," Tinsley says. "I'm someone who's never done learning."

What she learned in her finance and supply chain management courses at ASU resonated when she began working in the real world. One of her class projects was to evaluate an Arizona company – was it over- or under-valued? She was assigned to Inter-Tel, a communications business.

"It prepared me for work I'm in now," she says.

In 2001, Intel sent her to Copenhagen, where she acted as a controller proxy to train the CFO of a company that had been acquired by Intel. Her stint in Denmark lasted eight months.

Her advice to today's students is to "always look for opportunities," whether in school or in a professional field. Check out every job posting. As a newcomer, get in on the ground floor. "No job is too big or too small," she says.

Finance at ASU might give students the skills they need to work at a company such as Intel, but they also must have leadership qualities, says Andrew Bain, finance manager for World Wide Post Sales Support.

"We look for potential in leadership," Bain says. "Once you have the technical skills, then you have to prove yourself. Skills get you to the door; leadership gets you through the door."

That's what he gained as a finance student, says Bain, who in 2002 earned ASU bachelor's degrees in finance and in supply chain management. He's been with Intel six and a half years.

Bain has found a lot of job satisfaction at Intel. He is especially proud of efforts to disseminate information to underserved people worldwide, people who have learned to read and acquired complex skills. Communities in Africa have obtained low-cost computers.

Bain never expected to stay with one company so long. "But Intel afforded me a new opportunity at every turn," he says. In his six years, he's had five different jobs.

Intel tracks the performance of its ASU alums, Bain says, and finds that they "always perform extremely well." He credits the caliber of students entering the W. P. Carey School, opportunities for volunteer organizations outside of class, their exposure to professors and the attention faculty gives to each student.

Over the years, Bain has seen that quality of recruits increase.

"It's an incremental improvement year after year," he says. "ASU has continued to evolve. They're on the right track."