Learning about Business from a European Perspective
By Mary McClintock ’82

When Eli Ahrensdorf comments about European business practices or
international marketing, he brings up the courses he took during his 2008 fall
semester at Dublin Business School. At GCC, Eli learned about the nuts and
bolts of internet marketing. In marketing class, he learned how small
businesses market themselves. He realizes one would use different
strategies depending on the country in which the business is operating, and
what the business is trying to target.

Eli lived in Dublin and also traveled to the north and west of Ireland. Before the exchange semester, he and 20 other American exchange
students from colleges and universities around the U.S. attended a month-long introduction to Irish culture, politics, history, and
literature. Eli lived with an Irish family and another American, and
shared a six-person apartment with other American, two German, and two
French students. Running that living experience was high. Eli said a group
of his international friends saved money by cooking and eating with
each other. They took turns in pairs cooking for the group, having big
group dinners every night. The group became very close, all learning about
each other’s countries. Reflecting on Eli’s experience, Thom Simmons,
Chair of GCC’s Business & Information Technology Department, said, “I can think of no better educational experience among a young person than to be able to travel to a
country and immerse oneself in a different culture. The ability to actually work in an Irish environment while still being in a
European-style school system, and experience another people on their
home turf is life-changing. The ties between Ireland and the United
States are strong, but even the best stories of the ‘old country’ are no match for
what I am actually being there. If I had the
occasion, I would try to require every student to spend a semester somewhere else in the world. In the future, I am hoping to see more
students participate in the Dublin exchange program.”

Back in class this semester at GCC, Eli is putting his expanded world
view to work. In marketing class, when considering how small businesses market themselves, he realizes one would use different
strategies depending on the country in which the business is operating, and
what the business is trying to target. He says, “My internship and courses
in Ireland really helped broaden my perspective. The world and businesses so globalized, it looks very important to understand how
the rest of the world works. It was great to get out and explore another part of the world. I realized just how well prepared I am for
about their home countries. I have
much better prepared to understand people from other parts of the world.”

After finishing courses at GCC this
spring and summer, Eli hopes to travel to Ireland again and explore the
universities around the U.S. attended

and sign up for AlumNet, GCC’s online community!

Alum Spotlight
Matthew A. Sheridan ’99

Matt Sheridan first attended classes at GCC through the dual
enrollment program, taking business courses while a senior at
Greenfield High School. That sparked an interest that led to obtaining his
associate degree in Business Administration from GCC in 1999. He transferred to the UMass Boston School of Management, where he received his bachelor, cum laude, in 2002, with a major in Finance and a
minor in Economics. Matt began his career as a mutual fund accountant
in Boston and, since then, has worked as a Financial Analyst at A.G.
Edwards and Raymond James, and most recently as Assistant Vice
President & Investment Executive at Greenfield Savings Bank.
Matt appreciates GCC’s “very supportive and inspirational” faculty, especially Jeff Galbraith, Martha Field and David Ram. “They were
very effective teachers and their classes stand out as a positive
experience.” He also appreciates the affordability of GCC “saved a fortune.” He continues to be involved with the college as an
active member of the Alumni Association and by helping with the Annual Golf Tournament.

For more information and a complete look at the
day’s activities visit www.gcc.mass.edu or call the
Office of Admission at (413) 775-1801.

GCC’s ANNUAL SPRING OPEN HOUSE is open to the entire community.

Open House Day Program: 8:30 A.M.-1:30 P.M.
Evening Program: 5:30 P.M.-7:00 P.M.

• See current GCC students in action
  – Nursing/Health Fair
  – Mathematics and Statistics
  – Student Leaders
• Visit classes as a student for the day
• Learn about the many programs at GCC
  – Transfer Options
  – Career Programs
  – Collaborative Programs
  – Certificates
• Access information you need to make
GCC your best choice for learning
  – Application & Acceptance Process
  – Financial Aid
  – Student Support Services
• Meet Faculty and Staff

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