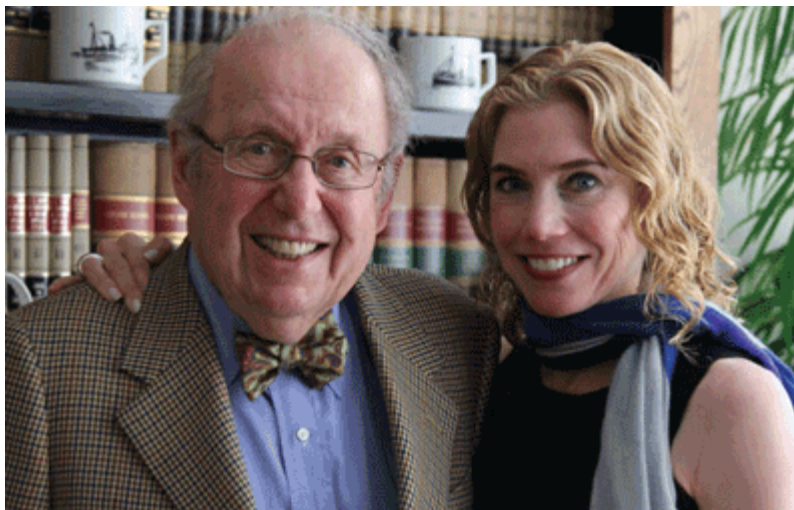


March 2012 • International Business

Fox feeds international business talent into Philadelphia firm that coordinates global trade



Sig Shapiro (left) took over as company president in 1968, and Margie Shapiro founded the Philadelphia office 20 years ago. She has served as president and CEO since 2002.

When Nick Pivovarnik first met Gloria Angel, assistant director of the Fox School's [Institute of Global Management Studies](#), in 2009, he was certain of one thing. He wanted to study abroad.

The Fox international business major wasn't sure of much else: not his career ambitions nor, really, himself. But he was soon convinced that adapting to a foreign country could be transformative. Ultimately, Pivovarnik traveled to Chile for a semester abroad, where he became the Universidad Adolfo Ibanez's only American student.

After spending a semester teaching economics and English to Chileans, Pivovarnik returned to Angel's office. She hardly recognized him. He spoke with confidence and expressed clear ambitions. He became one of the Temple study abroad office's most articulate advocates. Then he undertook a 14-month internship with the U.S. Commercial Service, where he excelled.

So when Richard Lucas, the recruiting manager at Philadelphia customs broker and international freight forwarder [Samuel Shapiro & Co.](#), asked Angel if she knew of any students possessing the drive and international savvy sought by the firm's internship program, she had the perfect man for the job.

"Our employees master some of the most complex transactions in the world: imports and exports into the United States," Lucas said. "If you are fascinated

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by international business – how companies are run, how regulations influence trade, how commodities are actually moved – if you're excited by shipping fleets, airlines and trucks, you'll fit in at Samuel Shapiro & Co."

Pivovarnik fit in. After his three-month internship, Samuel Shapiro & Co. hired him as a transportation service representative.

This wasn't the first time a Fox student was connected to Samuel Shapiro & Co. The firm has generated opportunities for six Fox School graduates and dozens of interns, making Fox the largest source of its Philadelphia office's staff.

Regional Manager Marina Barbalios Tasiopoulos has climbed the firm's ranks for 14 years. Import Manager Garrett Frankford has been on staff for five. Import account coordinators Ross Johnson and Kayla Travaglione, like Pivovarnik, both began as interns. All of them majored in international business at Fox, and all are driven by the fast-paced thrill of coordinating international commerce.

"If you are that smart person who craves constant mental engagement and stimulation, you might be sitting in the office adjacent to mine," Lucas said. "We're fast paced. Our employees help manage 80 to 90 shipments per month. Each of those shipments has its own hard deadline and each must be navigated through a series of unpredictable logistical challenges."

It's not always easy for Lucas to find students who thrive in this environment. He searches for critical thinkers who can follow a business process, be interrupted, devise a creative solution and then get back on track. When he's seeking new hires who meet these standards, Fox is at the top of his list.

"Fox students know the real world," Lucas said. "They've worked. They've held internships. They already understand customer service. They've already adapted to working under the pressure of real-world transactions. Honestly, I find Fox's grads are often better fits for Samuel Shapiro & Co. than even those with Ivy League degrees."

Pivovarnik is living up to Lucas' high expectations. He's learning Samuel Shapiro & Co.'s process in its entirety. He's speaking Spanish, which he learned in Chile, to occasional non-English-fluent clients. And he's drawing on his experience as a study abroad advocate to build relationships with a wide array of accounts.

Pivovarnik thanks Fox's faculty and staff for making this happen. But Angel takes a different perspective.

"Fox grads like Nick succeed because their hunger drives them to seek new opportunities and take chances. His major and study abroad component are only a small step," Angel said. "Nick is thriving because, like many of our grads, he knows how to push full throttle like none other."

–Carl O'Donnell



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