



Emmanuel College Graduate Management Program Embraced by Verizon Employee

Over the last few years, Jay Forst’s schedule has been packed with life-altering transitions. From leaving his native Long Island and moving to Boston, to finding a new position within Verizon Partner Solutions, to introducing his firstborn daughter to the world and even reacquainting himself back into academic life, his plate has certainly been full.

Forst and his wife Jean originally decided to move to the Boston area after she was offered a post-doctoral fellowship through Harvard University to do research at Children’s Hospital. A field technician with Verizon in New York at the time, Forst had already been looking to change roles within the company when his wife received the good news. Unfortunately, transferring locations was easier said than done.

Over the next year and a half, he continued to work in Long Island, waiting for a position to open up in the organization while his wife began her research at Children’s Hospital. Although forced to spend his weekdays apart from his wife, Forst was constantly trekking up to Boston during weekends, all the while anxiously awaiting news of available openings.

“That was the hardest part, trying to get up here every weekend or every other weekend, driving up Friday night and leaving Sunday,” he said. “But since I got up here full-time things have really settled down a lot. We love it here. Boston is a great town.”

After landing a position as an Operations Manager within Verizon and eventually moving to Charlestown, Forst barely had time to settle in before his next transition arrived just a few months later, his first child, Isabella.

Not long after Isabella came along, Forst began contemplating his own educational goals and quickly found himself interested in Emmanuel College’s Master of Science in Management.

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After gathering information from a fellow worker who was enrolled in Emmanuel College's accelerated Master of Science in Management, he too registered, despite the fact that he had a newborn baby occupying the majority of his thoughts and already limited free time. Yet it didn't take him long to recognize Emmanuel's program as a wonderful opportunity to advance his career.

“Being a father, my time is limited. So to be able to get a master's degree in as little as two years is a great opportunity.”

“I like going to class and listening to what other people have to say, I can always learn something,” he said. “And I'm learning more about management in terms of people instead of just numbers. It takes some getting used to coming back to school, but it's a good change.”

One of the interesting advantages Forst has as a student is his daily work as a supervisor, as he directs a staff of 10 central office technicians at Verizon. Dealing strictly with some of the company's largest business customers, Forst and his crew are responsible for troubleshooting and repairing any issues involving companies' landlines. During the first few weeks of class, he said he realized how beneficial his knowledge could be to the rest of his classmates.

Dr. Judith Marley, Dean of Graduate and Professional Programs, not only recognizes the benefits someone like Forst can bring to fellow classmates but to themselves as well, due to small class sizes and the distinct instructional model used in the program.

“Students have the opportunity to learn from each other and not just the instructor,” she said. “Most of our students bring tremendous work experience to the classroom, which is clearly a strength of our program. There is an opportunity for someone like Jay, who has a sense of where his company is going and what his needs are in his business, to dialog with other people from other environments as well as faculty members who have business experience along with advanced degrees. Students have the maximum opportunity to formalize their learning and apply theories in their businesses.”

During Marley's visit to one of his classes, Forst had the opportunity to share his ideas about future endeavors within the program and expressed an interest in the College offering on-site classes, which he felt would be of special interest to his fellow Verizon employees.

For Marley, initiatives such as these have long played a significant role in her workforce development efforts as a dean. With the Emmanuel College nursing program having already pioneered the way with its on-site classes and partnerships with many Boston-area hospitals, she sees great insight in Forst's thoughts.

“We do have the capacity for on-site courses for employers,” she said. “A more formalized relationship with a company like Verizon would make perfect sense. Many innovative employers select a partner like Emmanuel College for employee development efforts which tie to career paths and retain and develop their employees.”

And for students like Forst, having the ability to attend on-site classes would create a more convenient path to his educational goals.

“Being a father, my time is limited,” he said. “But to be able to get a master's in as little as two years, that's a great opportunity.”

