Gemini Shippers Association Scholarships Awarded
THREE ITM MAJORS RECEIVE SCHOLARSHIPS

We are pleased to announce that the Scholarship Selection Committee comprised of long-time ITM supporter, donor, and ITM advisory board member, Sara Mayes, President of Gemini Shippers Association, Nick Barratt, Educator and ITM advisory board member and alumnus, Amanda Barlow, Manager of United States Council for International Business, Secretary of the Organization of Women in International Trade, and ITM alumna, have chosen Larissa Zemke as the recipient of the 2011-2012 Gemini Shippers Association Academic Scholarship.

In her selection as the scholarship recipient, the committee recognized Larissa primarily for her outstanding academic performance, extensive international experience in global sourcing and production, and broad spectrum of volunteering activities. In demonstrating Larissa's outstanding capabilities, one of her professors cited in his reference letter Larissa's corporate social responsibility paper consisting of seventeen pages, seventy-seven footnotes, and content “substantial enough for submission in a graduate program.”

Larissa is multi-lingual, speaking English, German, French, Arabic, Slovak, and Spanish, and has a multi-cultural background, having lived in six countries and continued her career in three of them. She took a foundation course and attended a workshop in art and design in London and worked for Mumbai-headquartered Milaaya Embroideries and Ralph Lauren in Paris, Liska in Vienna, as well as Saks Fifth Ave., Bloomingdales, DZ Group, and Southpaw International: Vintage Clothing and Textiles in New York. Her experiences range from assisting in transactions involving high end designers like Givenchy, Chloe, Lanvin, and Sonia Rykiel, researching trends and suppliers, prospecting clients, and organizing store openings to assisting executives in promoting their garments and textiles.

Throughout her international education and career, Larissa engaged in volunteer activities, such as designing textile prints for Ann Yee, assisting in Intertek’s Ethical Sourcing Forum and well as USA-ITA's conference, serving as the International Trade Student Association’s (ITSA) FIT Students Association (FITSA) representative, providing expertise as a French tutor at FIT’s Academic Skills Tutoring Center, organizing the flea market in her capacity as Fundraising Officer of the FIT Snow Club, assisting to organize and the Fusion Fashion Show: FIT vs. Parsons, exhibiting textile/surface designs in the Graduate Student Art Show at the Museum of FIT, competing in a half-marathon in Spartanburg as a member of the FIT Cross-Country Team, participating in Fight Hunger: Walk the World in Slovakia, and many more.

Over the long-term Larissa hopes to run her own company, which would combine her knowledge of textiles, embroidery, and design with her business acumen. In the meantime, she aspires to learn the best practices from established enterprises, build a stronger network of contacts, and enrich her background with additional technical and management skills.

The same committee also selected Larissa, Jacqueline Elkort, and Joseph Delaney to receive the Gemini Shippers ITM 2012 Practicum Scholarship traveling to India in January 2012.

In addition to Larissa’s background described above, she was chosen to receive the practicum scholarship because she plans to complement her work experience at Milaaya Embroideries with a research project focusing on India's potential to become a leading future world supplier of textiles and embroidery. She intends to start her research through Milaaya’s New York office as well as American retailers, then complement this by building contacts with artists and designers as well as visiting embroidery and weaving manufacturers and suppliers in India.
Jacqueline has worked for Anthropologie, elevating its customer service offerings, taking inventories, and reorganizing its sales floors; Club H, where she developed specialized fitness plans and worked with trainers and instructors to expand instructional knowledge; and the Law Office of David Mejias and Associates, where she assisted attorneys in drafting and filing motions for and liaising with clients involved in estate and personal injury cases. She also helped to organize and execute events relating to the re-election campaign of David Mejias for Nassau County Legislator.

She is an active member of ITSA, volunteering at the Talking Trade at FIT guest lecture series, helping to organize and prepare goods for the ITSA bank sale, assisting to setup and run booths at the Intertek Ethical Sourcing forum as well as FIT’s fifth annual Sustainable Business and Design Conference, and providing consultation and modeling at the a local couture formalwear designers’ fashion show and lookbook. Through her fraternity, Alpha Phi, she raised funds by organizing sporting events for Women’s Cardiac Care, breast cancer, and the annual Take Back the Night event in Albany. Finally, she collected clothing and furniture for underprivileged children in Brooklyn.

For her practicum project, Jacqueline intends to research the effect of industrialization on India’s environment and find out the measures the government, interest groups, foreign stakeholders, companies, factories, and individuals are taking to curtail any adverse impact of this undertaking. This project is consistent with Jacqueline’s intention to pursue a career in international corporate responsibility, intending to be in the forefront of influencing fashion brands in ethical sourcing.

Joseph is currently the quality control and e-commerce stock clerk of The Dessy Group, campus representative of Tom’s Shoes, FIT Residential Life’s resident assistant, and FIT Student Life’s student ambassador. He has also been a stock room logistics and marketing assistant at Fashion Delivers Charitable Foundation, a fabric research and development intern at Fishman & Tobin, an accounting clerk and customer service representative at SOS Advanced Securities, an accounting intern at J. Mendel, an administrative coordinator at Fordham Preparatory School, and the head teaching assistant in charge of twenty teaching assistants of the Higher Achievement Program.

A consistent volunteer since the fifth grade, when he tutored third graders in math, Joseph spent his most recent spring break lending a hand to a cause in New Orleans and also recently provided labor and consulting services with a group of AmeriCorps members to properly fix a crumbling middle school during MLK Day in Baton Rouge. He has worked with children having learning disabilities through Heartsong, Inc. by providing art and music therapy. He spent a week building houses and fundraising for Habitat for Humanity in Tennessee. Joseph is presently an active survivor advocate of Sexual Assault Victims Intervention as well as referee and moderator assistant of FITSA.

For the practicum, Joseph intends to work with a local non-governmental organization in exploring the role of microfinance in India’s society, its positive and negative outcomes, including the effect of foreclosures. This also support’s Joseph’s plan to pursue a career in corporate social responsibility, demonstrating particular expertise in the field of human rights practices and his passion for philanthropy.

I hope that you will all join us in congratulating Larissa, Jacqueline, and Joseph as ITM’s new Gemini Shippers Association scholars.