



On Christmas morning, Miri's gifts included a \$100 donation to the Bat Lab.

# A Christmas Wish from a Young Bat Fan

\$100 will work to save bats from white-nose syndrome

in 2013," says Freeman. While details of the endowed chairs are being worked out, he says, the professorships will have many indirect impacts as the faculty increases its emphasis on ethics in business. "That's the beauty of the Questrom name, which is synonymous with business success, business results, and the highest integrity," says Freeman, describing Questrom as "an icon of corporate America."

"We are grateful that Allen and Kelli Questrom share with us a vision for the future of the School of Management and that they are willing to so generously help make our aspirations a reality," says BU President Robert A. Brown. "Their gift will help to attract and support distinguished faculty members and to seed the fundraising for a new extension to the school's facilities. Together, these initiatives will further strengthen the quality of the education available to our students and help place the School of Management in the forefront of business schools worldwide."

This is the Questroms' second major gift to SMG. In 2007, the Allen & Kelli Questrom Foundation gave \$4 million for the school's endowed deanship and professorship. Former SMG Dean Louis Lataif (SMG'61, Hon.'90), who retired in 2010, was the first Allen Questrom Professor and Dean, the chair now held by Freeman. The chair is the only endowed deanship at BU. Questrom is a former chairman of the board and chief executive officer of the J. C. Penney Company, Neiman Marcus, Barneys New York, and Federated Department Stores, Inc., which today is known as Macy's.

"I wouldn't have found a fitting career in retailing without BU, so I have a very clear responsibility to give back," says Questrom, who studied finance and marketing, but had no idea what he wanted to do until he excelled in an elective course in retailing. He says his SMG course work gave him a substantial academic edge, and he went on to legendary success, restoring to health several retail corporations, and saving and creating thousands of jobs.

SUSAN SELIGSON

One day in fall 2011, Lynn Parrucci was surprised to find her seven-year-old daughter, Miriam, crying at her computer.

"I'm writing a letter to Santa," Miriam explained, "but I can't spell syndrome."

"I spelled it for her," Parrucci recalls, "then it hit me: wait, why does Miri need to know how to spell syndrome in a letter to Santa?"

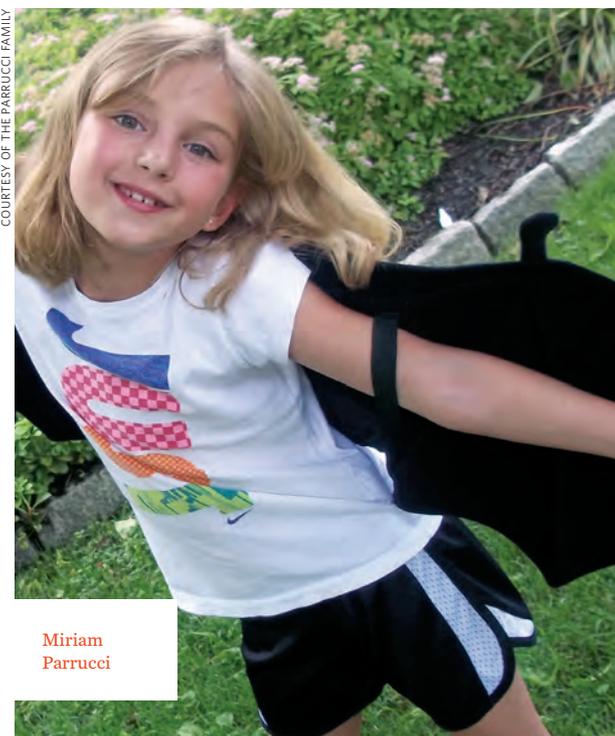
Miri told her mother that in school she had learned about white-nose syndrome, a disease that has been killing bats, and about BU's Kunz Bat Lab, part of the Center for Ecology & Conservation Biology, and its efforts to understand and eradicate the disease.

A fan of bats since she was "probably two years old"—her mother had read *Stellaluna* to her, and she fell in love with the eponymous fruit bat—Miri was heartbroken to hear that her beloved mammals were dying. So, she decided to turn to the one person she knew could help: Santa Claus.

"Dear Santa, My biggest Christmas wish is to save the bats," she wrote. "There are many bats that are getting very sick from a disease called white-nose syndrome. I really hope that they can get better. I love bats. This is my really, really biggest Christmas wish, and I want you to do that. Thank you."

Miriam's parents were touched by her efforts, but they tried to set a few things straight. "My husband tried to explain to her that bats aren't really Santa's expertise—his line of work being toys," Parrucci says. But Miriam wasn't buying it: "He's got the magic, Dad!"

COURTESY OF THE PARRUCCI FAMILY



Miriam Parrucci

When a local radio announcer posed an on-air question—"What's the most surprising thing your child asked Santa for?"—Parrucci emailed the producer, who invited Miri to be on the radio. "People started sharing all sorts of links and news about bats with us and sending Miri articles," Parrucci says.

On Christmas morning, Miri came downstairs to find her gifts: a toy bat, a children's book on bats, and a letter from Santa explaining that a donation of \$100 had been made in her name to the Bat Lab. "Because you were brave to share your love of bats with your friends and your community," the letter read, "your Christmas wish spread."

Now Miriam has another wish: to be a bat biologist when she grows up.

CAITLIN CUSHMAN