

## **BU Global**

### **Eleni Soultanoglou (Project Management '07)**

WHERE ARE YOU FROM AND WHAT BROUGHT YOU TO BU GLOBAL?

I'm from Greece. I studied International Hospitality Management in Switzerland and I worked three years in independent hotels in Greece, and it was the time to move on with my career.

An article on [bi-me.com](http://www.bi-me.com) about the Project Management Institute (PMI) Business Roundtable entitled "Project Management—the Strategic Competence for Delivering Complex Projects" ( [HYPERLINK "http://www.bi-me.com/main.php?c=34&cg=&id=6035&t=1"](http://www.bi-me.com/main.php?c=34&cg=&id=6035&t=1) [www.bi-me.com/main.php?c=34&cg=&id=6035&t=1](http://www.bi-me.com/main.php?c=34&cg=&id=6035&t=1)) and an interview in Dubai (where I was first introduced to Six Sigma by the Master Black Belt in Sheraton Creek Hotel & Towers) were the two reasons why I chose project management over any other option. I was surprised to see that only 14 universities in US are PMI®-accredited—and one of them was Boston University. This is the reason I chose this program, offered by BU Global.

HOW EFFECTIVE WAS THE GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN PROJECT MANAGEMENT IN TERMS OF HELPING YOU GAIN THE EXPERIENCE YOU DESIRED?

The Graduate Diploma in Project Management was the best decision that I have made. Having the chance to work closely with and learn from professionals in the field is the biggest asset of the program. A whole new world of management was introduced to us. Following the new trends in the business world, project management is the tool that will give competitive edge to any business.

YOUR JOB AT SHERATON SOUNDS INTERESTING. WHAT DO YOU DO THERE?

I'm responsible for supporting the director of Six Sigma in meeting all the financial and non-financial goals assigned to the Sheraton NY Hotel & Towers and the Sheraton Manhattan at Times Square. I support both properties' Green Belts (department heads and managers certified to lead a project affecting their department) by helping them to transfer Best Practices projects, gather data, implement new solutions, and

monitor progress. The most important part is that we are working on simplifying and standardizing processes already used in the various departments of the hotel by introducing new solutions.

WHAT IS A "SIX SIGMA MANAGER"?

A Six Sigma Manager is another term for "Hotel Project Manager." A project manager leads a team of experts. In other words, he or she is the center of a network of functional areas that perform together (Front Desk, F&B, Rooms, Banquets/Catering, Finance, Housekeeping, and Engineering). The project manager is the main contact person, who oversees and coordinates the success of projects implemented in the different areas of the hotel.

WHILE YOU ARE DOING OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT), WILL YOUR JOB BE THE SAME OR DIFFERENT?

The job description is the same. From the beginning I was given responsibilities as a full-time employee and I was never considered a trainee or a student. But above all, they informed me that if our cooperation is successful they will sponsor me.

WAS YOUR INTERNSHIP AT WESTIN COPLEY HELPFUL IN LANDING THE JOB WITH SHERATON? WHAT WERE SOME OTHER BENEFITS OF THE INTERNSHIP?

Definitely. It gave me the opportunity to prove myself and to make my way through Starwood chain of hotels. My supervisor at Westin Copley believed in me and helped me to meet the right people and look for the right position within the company.

HOW DOES IT FEEL TO BE SPONSORED BY SHERATON TO STAY IN THE U.S.?  
HOW LONG IS THE SPONSORSHIP FOR?

That was the main reason I chose Starwood over any other hotel chain. They believe in young people and they are also interested in international students that try to make it through in the U.S. I have already submitted my papers for the H1 Visa, so if everything goes well I will be sponsored for three years.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR BU GLOBAL PROGRAM, INTERNSHIP, AND OPT EXPERIENCE TO A PROSPECTIVE STUDENT?

The Project Management diploma program is the ticket to a new career. It provides you with a strong basis on which to build your future, and you have the option to subscribe to a whole network of project management professionals—the Project Management Institute—who can support you throughout your career. This program also prepares you for the PMP® and CAPM certifications, to which I'm currently applying. The OPT is a "passport," an opportunity given to international students who are willing to make a new, successful start in the US.