

BU Global Graduation

International Marketing, Spring 2008

By Federica Ionta

Dear Faculty, Professors, Friends, and Colleagues. Ladies and Gentlemen: Good Evening.

I am pleased and proud to be here, tonight, in front of you all and on behalf of my newly graduated colleagues and friends, to celebrate the “Night of the BUGS,” which as we know are the BU Global Students.

When I told my family I was about to leave Italy for the U.S., they were half astonished and half worried. I had a good job, friends, and everything that makes life good. Or at least good enough, for most of the people. But not for us. Not for the BUGS. We all were moved by different feelings and needs and ambitions, and we all bravely flew from the most different places in the world to this beautiful and sophisticated city, that is Boston. Some of us came here for a shift in their career, some others to confirm their vocation. Some moved and joined a significant other; others had to leave their beloved “at home.” Someone found a new friend, someone found a new love, and I know that someone was even thinking about taking a new pet! The fact is that we all had a “fire” burning inside us, and we all were brave and foolish enough—I would say—to decide that we were still young enough to leave everything we had and change.

Thank God we did! We started with language problems, housing problems, mice problems... and then here we are, after four months, beautiful and fresh and with the smile of an important target achieved.

Here they are, Willis and Azamat: smiling, joking... you could think that Kazakhstan and Taiwan are the same country. I can see Alev, who was strong enough not to give up at the beginning, and Esther, her inseparable friend. I see Sabir, always kind and helpful, and Mariko, delicious girl... and cook; we will miss your biscuits! Tonight I miss the fancy

voice of Yoona and the sympathy of Sophie. I see the warm smile of Fernando, for sure, and the elegance of Tia, maybe one of the only two girls taller than me that I have ever met. The second is Pame, always with her Starbucks coffee. Maybe that is the recipe for a couple of inches more! I see Carmen, who looks so professional, but I can tell you: she never missed a party. I see Marina, with her Spanish sweetheart and the British accent that no one was able to learn. Including me. I see Caglar, always nice and smiling even if most of us continue to call him “C-a-g-l-a-r.” Here they are Ling, a sparkling cocktail of smartness and kindness, and Stanley, the energy of the youth. I miss Maria Gomez, a unique friend and intelligent woman—even if in the “body of a *blondie*.” And I see two of my best friends here. Laura, who teaches me that Brazil is not simply fabulous beaches and samba parties: it is *joie de vivre* and a tireless and contagious smile. And Eva, the one who teaches me that there is not “right” or “wrong” in life: there is “different.”

Here we all are, after four hard months. We won the simulation game; we lost the simulation game at last. We shared emotions and books, notes and fears. But first of all we shared together this important piece of our lives. An experience that, I hope, will always be a common point in our different future days.

Everything we were used to in the past months is now over. No more Monday evenings talking about disruptive technologies for diabetes patients in the seventies, nor Wednesdays fighting with the distribution of all the means in the normal distribution of the mean. Teco Candies has closed, and the same with all the worldwide distributors that we chose to move Japanese clothes to Africa or Spanish wine to Italy (I don't know which business is less profitable!). The simulation software has finally retired with all the exchange rate issues, and *The Economist* has confirmed that indeed Japan is the most profitable place to build a factory. Our websites are finally online and the advertising campaign is bringing thousands of customers every day. No more homework, no more stress. Close your books, store your notes, turn off your laptops, and close your eyes. It is finished. Now open your eyes, and prepare because new challenges are coming.

After all these words of mine, I would like to leave you with a quote, which is among my favorites. It is from Malcolm X. He said, "Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today." We have been lucky enough to get the best education in one of the most prestigious universities in the U.S. and the world. Now let's go, and take our future!

ARRIVEDERCI!