

ALUM PROFILE

The Teenage Med Student

Monica Jain started BU at fifteen, and has kept pace

WHEN MONICA JAIN entered the School of Medicine last fall, she scanned a fact sheet with her class breakdown. Most of her classmates were in their twenties; some nudging thirty. Only one was nineteen.

"Everyone was wondering who the nineteen-year-old was," says Jain (ENG'08), "but since there were people from my previous BU classes, word got around pretty quickly."

The Arizona native is used to being the youngest in her class; she skipped kindergarten and eighth grade and finished high school in three years so she could move to the East Coast with her parents when her mother's job was transferred. She was just fifteen when she arrived at BU.

But Jain had no trouble fitting in, she says. She made friends, volunteered in area hospitals, and joined BU's Indian fusion dance group Jalwa. "I got comfortable pretty quickly," she says, "and I didn't advertise that I was younger. People didn't treat me any differently after they got over the initial shock."

Professors were impressed by Jain's maturity. John White, a former College of Engineering associate professor of biomedical engineering, who is now at the University of Utah, says she "seemed older, rather than younger, than the other freshmen. One-on-one, it was fun to speak with her. She was well-directed, mature, and savvy."

Her age became an issue only once — she was not allowed to live on campus freshman year. Instead, she commuted from her home in Natick, Massachusetts. "Looking back, I don't think it really mattered," she says. "I was involved in so many different activities that it didn't make a difference."

By the end of her sophomore year, Jain had the next six years of her life figured out. She had been accepted to the ENGMEDIC program, designed for biomedical engineering students interested in becoming physicians.

Jain says she enjoyed her first year at MED, which encourages student-patient interaction early on. She helped



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VERNON DOUCETTE

interview patients before their examinations and assisted with preliminary examinations. "I love learning medicine in such a practical, real-world setting," she says. "All of the patients are extremely supportive of the fact that medical students need to learn in such an environment."

Before completing medical school, she plans to take time off to earn an M.B.A. at BU's School of Management. "I know I want to practice medicine, but I want to have different opportunities, and the option to try new things and move up in my field," she says. "People think that since I'm young, I don't know what I'm getting myself into, but I don't think that's the case. My age doesn't affect my maturity."

BRITTANY REHMER (COM'11)

MAGGIE KOKER (ENG'07) of Neenah, Wis., completed her master's thesis in mechanical engineering at the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana and will pursue a Ph.D at the Max Planck Institute for Materials Research in Stuttgart, Germany. E-mail Maggie at margaretkoker@gmail.com.

BARRI TSAVARIS (COM'07) of Bronx, N.Y., produced her first full-length play, *I Will Follow*, at the Actors' Playhouse in August as part of the New York International Fringe Festival. The full-ensemble comedy chronicles the playwright's semiautobiographical quest for

truth, love, and religion through the music of U2. *"I Will Follow"* explores the challenge of finding yourself when you're already committed to following something else," Barri writes. To learn more about the production, visit www.iwillfollowtheplay.com.

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BLAKE GOODWIN (CFA'08) of Boston, Mass., is a project manager at the custom mosaic design company ArtaiC. The company has been working with a number of other BU alums as well as students, including **GEORGE SHAW**

(CFA'08), who developed software used to design the mosaics and control robotic production; **MICHAEL DEAL** (CFA'09), **COLIN MAHONEY** (CFA'09), and **JANE SONG** (CFA'09), who worked on branding and marketing; and **CHRISTIAN ESTEN** (CGS'08, COM'10), who is helping to develop the company's promotional video. Visit www.artaic.com.

ANDREW KENNEALLY (MET'08) of Boston, Mass., campaigned for an at-large seat on the Boston City Council this year. Visit www.ANDY09.com, or e-mail Andrew at andy@andrewkenneally.com.