

GRADUATE

During their years at Case, the 2006 graduates profiled here worked hard, played hard, and tried hard to make the world a better place. Balancing the demands of work, the joy of leisure, and the call of conscience is the occupation of a lifetime, and these young people have gotten a head start.

During her time at Case, Katherine Allen has taken advantage of many opportunities to learn in and out of the classroom. She did a summer internship in mineral physics research at SUNY, Buffalo; spent a semester in New Zealand; and studied hydrologic and climate history of Lake Erie with Case geology professor Beverly Saylor. As a varsity member of the Case women's crew team, Katherine experienced Cleveland in ways available only to the intrepid and those willing to pry themselves out of a warm bed on cold, dark mornings.

ADVICE TO INCOMING STUDENTS?

Try everything—odd classes, clubs, hole-in-the-wall restaurants, local bands, authors you never heard of. Take the bus downtown. Study abroad. Get involved in the community, and don't get stuck in the "college bubble."

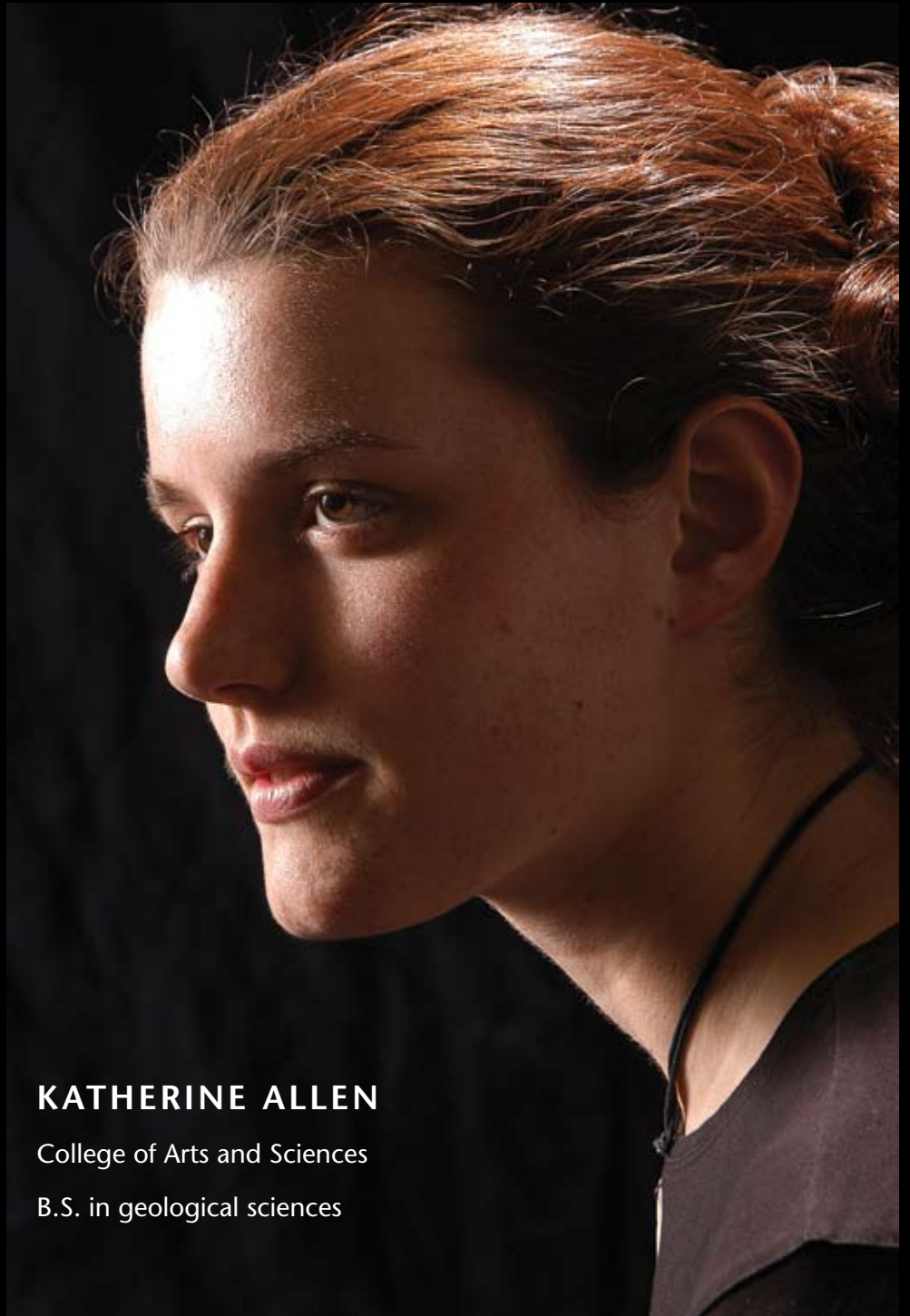
CLASS THAT PREPARED YOU BEST FOR WHAT'S NEXT?

COSI 100, Introduction to Human Communications taught by Professor Routman.

WHAT IS NEXT? A one-year, master's program in earth sciences at University of Cambridge in England. I'll be researching climate change.

FAVORITE OFF-CAMPUS PLACE TO HANG OUT?

I joined the crew team in my first year, and I spent most of my free time on the Cuyahoga River. I've seen colorful graffiti under the bridges, bright lights in the Flats, and massive barges taller than most buildings on campus plowing toward the lake. When I think of Cleveland in ten years, these are the scenes I will remember.



KATHERINE ALLEN

College of Arts and Sciences

B.S. in geological sciences

PROFILES

COVER STORY

BY MEREDITH HOLMES
PHOTOGRAPHY BY DANIEL MILNER



TOMAR NICOLE BROWN
School of Law, J.D.

Tomar Nicole Brown, a Pittsburgh native and a graduate of Denison University, was selected as a 2006–08 Equal Justice Works Fellow by the Legal Aid Society of Cleveland. She is the first Case student to receive this prestigious fellowship. The two-year Equal Justice Fellow program supports attorneys who work on behalf of undeserved populations. Tomar was a summer associate with the Legal Aid Society in 2004 and 2005. She also worked as a legislative assistant for Ohio State Representative Shirley Smith and clerked for the Cuyahoga County public defender.

FAVORITE HANG-OUT? I really didn't really have a "hang out," but I spent a ton of time at the Cedar-Fairmount Starbucks.

FAVORITE CLASS OUTSIDE YOUR FIELD OF STUDY? For better or worse, I took only law-related classes. My clinical courses were the most memorable. The Criminal Clinic at the Milton Kramer Law Clinic, which manages clients with cases pending in Euclid and Cleveland Heights, and the Death Penalty Lab provided me with the best preparation for post-graduate life.

HOW ABOUT FRIENDS? My best friend has been my anchor. You can't get through a rigorous professional program without friends who understand what you are going through, encourage you not to quit studying, and act as a reality check.

WHAT'S NEXT? As an Equal Justice Works Fellow, I will implement the Continued Legal Advocacy for Student Success (C.L.A.S.S.) program. The goal is to reduce juvenile recidivism by meeting the educational needs of students in the delinquency system.



KEVIN EL-HAYEK

School of Medicine, M. D.

Kevin El-Hayek, a native of Youngstown, Ohio, is headed to the Cleveland Clinic for a general surgery residency. During his time at Case, he has been active in the Christian Medical and Dental Association (CMDA) chapter and at Parkside Church. He also found time to serve as assistant coach for the Case wrestling team.

MOST INTERESTING CLASS OUTSIDE YOUR MAJOR FIELD OF STUDY?

An elective in whole-person care I took at Loma Linda in the summer after my first year. The class focused on spiritual care within medicine – a topic we don't get much exposure to as medical students.

BEFORE YOU CAME TO CASE, WHAT DID YOU THINK GRAD SCHOOL WOULD BE LIKE?

Much more grueling than undergrad, no time for anything but studying, and during the clinical years—a black hole—100 hours a week in the hospital.

WAS IT LIKE THAT? Sometimes I barely kept my head above water, other times, I had too little to do. I realized medical school is a lot like the crazy weather in Cleveland!

WHAT CLASS GAVE YOU THE BEST PREPARATION FOR YOUR NEXT STEP?

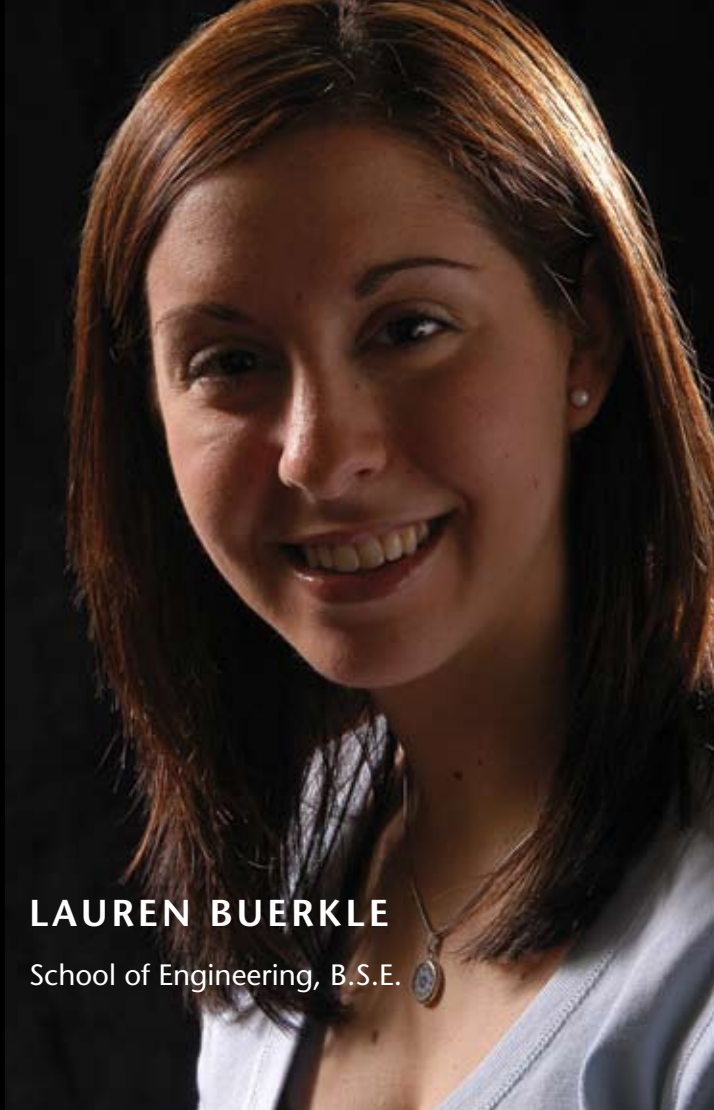
Since, I'm considering a career in surgical education in the developing world, my one-month-away rotation at Bongolo Evangelical Hospital in Gabon, Africa. But first, I have to make it though residency.

FAVORITE OFF-CAMPUS HANG-OUT?

I am partial to Fat Fish Blue, since I met my wife there during a grad school mixer in my first year. I wasn't looking for a spouse, but there she was!

WHAT DREW YOU TO THE PEOPLE WHO BECAME YOUR FRIENDS?

A common belief that medicine is more than a business; it is also a ministry.



LAUREN BUERKLE

School of Engineering, B.S.E.

Lauren Buerkle came to Case from St. Louis, Missouri. She majored in biomedical engineering, with a concentration in polymer biomaterials. After graduation, she'll begin the master's and doctorate program in macromolecular science and engineering at Case.

ADVICE FOR IN-COMING STUDENTS? Be open-minded about your major and what the department has to offer beyond classes. Look at research opportunities and personal attention, and make sure you choose a program where you get along with the other students. Meet the professors before you declare your major!

FAVORITE EATERY ON CAMPUS? BRB Café.

BEFORE YOU CAME TO CASE, WHAT DID YOU THINK IT WOULD BE LIKE? I knew Case would be a challenge. Fortunately, I went to a high school that required almost as much work as here, so I was better prepared than most of my friends.

FAVORITE OFF-CAMPUS HANG-OUT? Little Italy.

BEST CLASS OUTSIDE YOUR MAJOR FIELD OF STUDY? THTR100 – also known as “Recess for Undergraduates.”

WHICH CLASS GAVE YOU THE BEST PREPARATION FOR YOUR NEXT STEP? EBME/EMAC 303 – Structure of Biologic Materials.

WHAT DREW YOU TO THE PEOPLE WHO BECAME YOUR FRIENDS? We're all nerds who love to have fun!

Originally from Enumclaw, Washington, Kurtis Kacer received his undergraduate degree from Western Washington University. After graduation, Kurtis will enter the orthodontic program at Case. Then he plans to move to Tucson, Arizona, with his wife, Caroline Kaiser, a fellow 2006 graduate of the School of Dental Medicine.

ADVICE TO INCOMING STUDENTS? Be prepared to work very hard and make time management a top priority.

FAVORITE OFF-CAMPUS EATERY? Sun Luck Garden on South Taylor in Cleveland Heights—best Chinese food I've had in Cleveland. Loved the crab rangoon.

WHAT DID YOU THINK GRADUATE SCHOOL AT CASE WOULD BE LIKE?

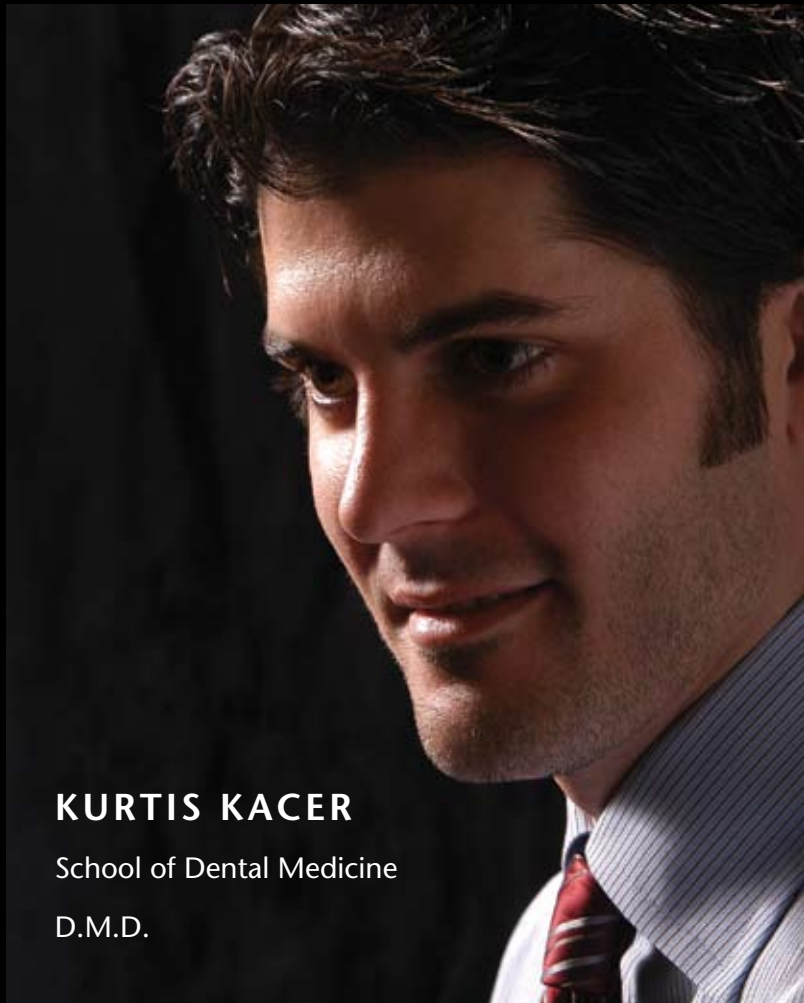
I had no idea—pictured being in class from about 9 a.m. until 4 p.m., then having the evenings to relax. I found out classes start at 8 a.m. and go to 5 p.m. or later. Then you go home and study all night. The first two years are very stressful and demanding.

CLASS THAT PREPARED YOU BEST FOR YOUR NEXT STEP?

Orthodontics taught by Dr. Mark Hans and Dr. Maneesh Valiathan. This class led to my choosing orthodontics as a profession.

WHAT DREW YOU TO THE PEOPLE WHO BECAME YOUR FRIENDS?

The ability to make me laugh—especially at myself. Also, I'm very involved in sports—so some of my best friends were the ones I played basketball or flag football with. I've met some great people at Case.



KURTIS KACER

School of Dental Medicine

D.M.D.



CAROLINE KAISER

School of Dental Medicine

D.M.D.

Caroline Kaiser is a second-generation graduate of the School of Dental Medicine.

Her father, Dr. Owen Kaiser, graduated from the program in 1978. She grew up in Tucson, Arizona, where it is warm and sunny most of the year. Caroline missed good Mexican food in Cleveland, but this loss was offset by all the friends she made here, including her husband, Kurtis Kacer, whom she met in dental lab.

ADVICE TO INCOMING

STUDENTS? Buy a winter coat—not a thin stylish one, but a heavy-duty down jacket.

WHAT DID YOU THINK GRAD SCHOOL AT CASE WOULD

BE LIKE? I expected hard work, good food, and new friends. My expectations were met the first day and surpassed every day after that. I did work hard—sometimes I thought there was just no room left in my brain for new information. I discovered Cleveland has some great restaurants. And I've cultivated many long-term relationships here at Case, including the very special one with my husband.

FAVORITE ON-CAMPUS EATERY?

Java Jive in Bolwell Center and Einstein's Bagel Shop in the UH Atrium. I had lots of early mornings.

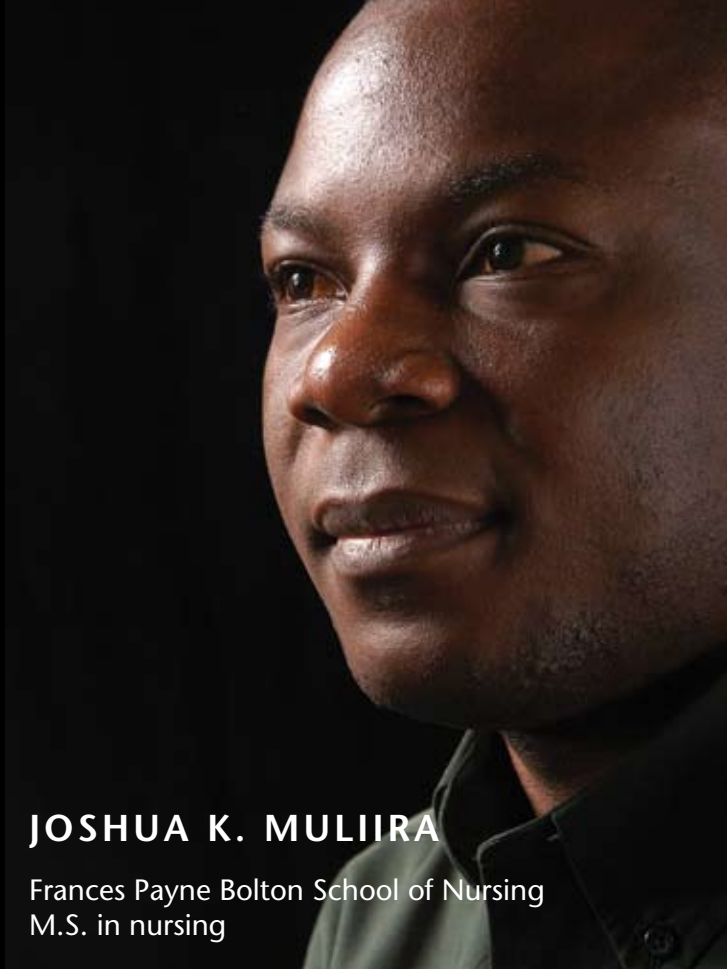
IF YOU HAD TIME FOR A CLASS OUTSIDE YOUR MAJOR FIELD OF STUDY WHAT WOULD YOU

TAKE? I would brush up on my Spanish or take a business course.

FAVORITE OFF-CAMPUS HANG-

OUT? For relaxing with friends—if you are of age, of course—Sushi Rock and Divine Wine Bar, both downtown, were great.

WHAT'S NEXT? The Montefiore Medical Center program in oral and maxillofacial surgery.



JOSHUA K. MULIIRA

Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing
M.S. in nursing

Joshua K. Muliira was born and raised in Gulu village in the town of Mukono, about twenty miles east of Kampala, Uganda. *Gulu* in the Luganda language means “heaven.” However, Joshua points out that conditions there are far from heavenly, since Gulu has no running water. Joshua plans to get his Doctor of Nursing degree and then return to Uganda to teach at Makerere University, practice at Mulago National hospital, and improve the lives of older adults.

ADVICE TO NEW STUDENTS? Use the challenge of graduate school to bring out the best in yourself. Value the challenge, take it seriously, but also enjoy it.

WHAT DID YOU THINK GRADUATE SCHOOL WOULD BE LIKE?

I thought I would have to know everything in my field of specialization—down to the finest detail.

WERE THESE EXPECTATIONS CONFIRMED? Case is very competitive—you must be ready to commit to reading, research, and writing.

AND ON THE OTHER HAND? No matter what your specialty, you can’t know everything, but you can find the information you need. To me, specialization means commitment to lifelong learning.

FAVORITE EATERY ON CAMPUS? Club Isabella. I saved for their Moroccan chicken. When I didn’t have urgent assignments, I would go there for the jazz. The music rejuvenated me when I was homesick.

HOW ABOUT OFF-CAMPUS? On weekends, Johnny Malloy’s sports bar—five minutes from my apartment and next to a pizza shop. I never worried about cooking—only talking to friends and watching the game.

WHAT DREW YOU TO THE PEOPLE WHO BECAME YOUR FRIENDS?

People from very different backgrounds who were ambitious. My friends were from Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Americas—there was something new and exciting to learn every time we talked.

Sarah Rissler, who grew up in Findlay, Ohio, and got her undergraduate degree in human services and social work at the “tiny” Saint Joseph College in Indiana, experienced a bit of culture shock when she came to Cleveland. This did not deter her from pursuing two master’s degrees simultaneously, winning an alumni scholarship, and working on a levy campaign. At the Geauga County Board of Mental Retardation, Sarah wrote and received a grant from McDonald House Charities that enabled her employer to buy equipment for its speech, music, and physical education programs.

ADVICE TO INCOMING STUDENTS? Learn to manage your time. It’s easy to get overwhelmed with classes, field placements, and life. Free time is rare, so learn to enjoy that, too.

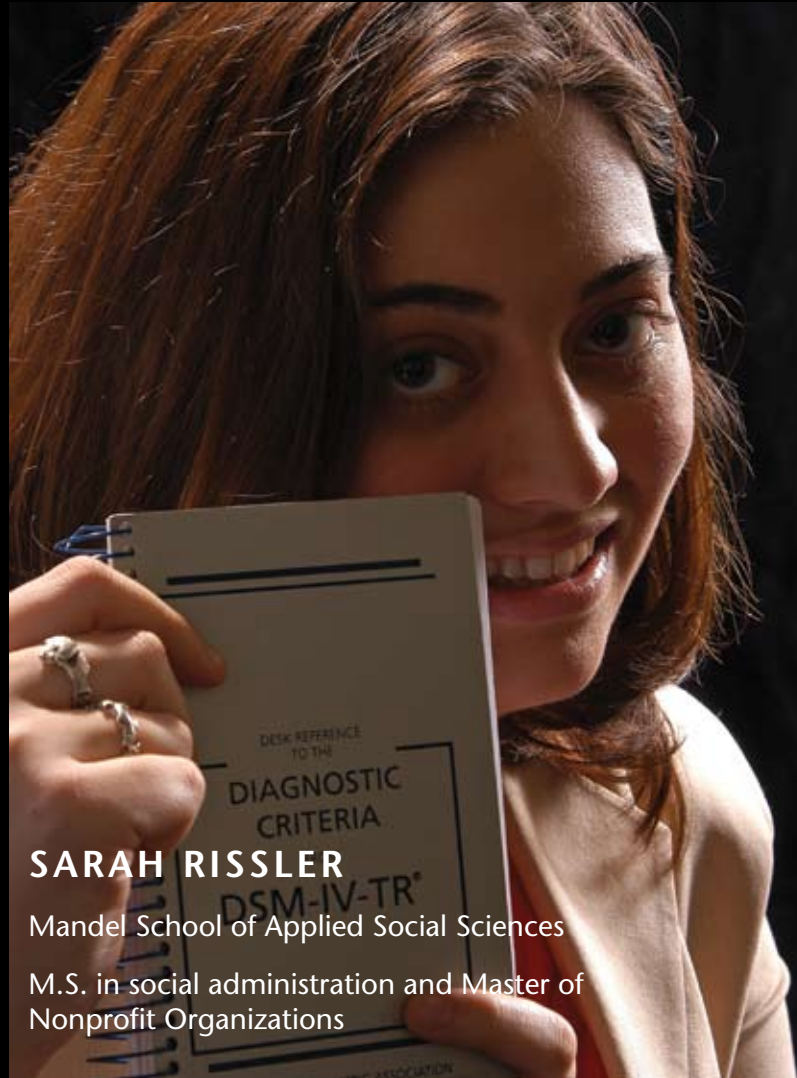
WHAT CLASS GAVE YOU THE BEST PREPARATION FOR YOUR NEXT STEP?

At MSASS, psychopathology gave me wonderful grounding in clinical work. At the Mandel Center, Law, Financial Management, and Strategic Planning prepared me for a new project I’m undertaking.

WHAT WAS GRAD SCHOOL LIKE FOR YOU?

Extremely competitive. Working on two masters at once was a big challenge. I had to balance the clinical aspects of one program with the business aspects of the other. That required two separate kinds of thinking.

WHAT’S NEXT? Spending a few weeks traveling through Europe and then starting a new job, working with people with mental retardation and developmental disabilities.



SARAH RISSLER

Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences

M.S. in social administration and Master of Nonprofit Organizations