

ACADEMICS

GWU 10-Month MBA Students Achieve Success in Global Strategy Game

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- ▲ The members of the 10-Month MBA Team, who experienced success in the Business Strategy Game: from left, Venu Nagalla, Manuela Amanovic and Karlyn Armsworthy.

Team Competes Against More Than 1,500, Places in Top 100 Performers

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—Utilizing knowledge gained from classes in the 10-month MBA program, three Gardner-Webb University students experienced success in The Business Strategy Game (<https://www.bsg-online.com/>). (BSG), an online exercise in management. Taught by Dr. Christi Sutton, assistant professor of business administration, the students—Karlyn Armsworthy, Venu Nagalla, and Manuela Amanovic—placed their company, H Traction Athletics, into the top 100 performers. They competed against 1,589 teams from 99 colleges and universities located around the world.

“I am very proud of this team and these students individually,” Sutton praised. “The BSG simulation is administered in the MBA capstone course and students must incorporate lessons from all of the preceding courses to do well. This team certainly exceeded expectations. It is always wonderful to watch people from such different backgrounds collaborate seamlessly to achieve success, both inside and outside of the classroom setting.”



While BSG is a simulation, it replicates real-life scenarios. Class members are divided into teams and assigned the task of running an athletic footwear company in head-to-head competition against companies managed by other class members. Company operations parallel those of actual athletic footwear companies. Just as in the real-world, companies compete in a global market arena, selling branded and private-label athletic footwear in four geographic regions: Europe-Africa, North America, Asia-Pacific, and Latin America.

The students did not know each other before being matched up for the simulation. Armsworthy is from Mocksville, N.C. Nagalla, who is originally from Tenali, India, lives in Hickory, N.C., and Amanovic is from Bosanska Gradiska, Bosnia and Herzegovina.



▲ Manuela Amanovic

“My teammates and I are from very diverse backgrounds, not only do we come from different continents (North America, Asia and Europe), we also have different professional backgrounds, which I believe contributed to our success,” Amanovic observed. “Just like in any real organization, individuals with diverse backgrounds and skillsets can come together and make a real impact. We turned our differences into our strengths and allowed every team member the opportunity to use their experience and background to contribute to the team’s success, which ultimately set us apart from the competition.”



▲ Karlyn Armsworthy

Armsworthy agreed, “We instantly connected and shared the same work ethic. All three of us are somewhat competitive in nature, so our work was centered around the common goal of doing the best we could each week. Venu’s experience is in manufacturing operations, Manuela is an HR director, and my background is business management and marketing, so the three of us each had different viewpoints and we complimented each other well.”

Amanovic graduates from the 10-month MBA program in August 2021. “I believe that the Business Strategy Game was the perfect way to end the MBA program,” she stated. “It allowed us to take the theories we have studied throughout the coursework and apply them into practice. We were able to gather valuable experience making management decisions in a real-world-like competitive environment and learned the direct impact our actions have on the company’s results.”

Nagalla, a May 2021 graduate, noted that the team focused on several key strategies, such as hiring good workers with higher base pay and benefits; reading the competition in every area like production capacity, number of models offered, and advertising and marketing; and paying close attention to tariff and export costs.

An operations manager in manufacturing, Nagalla said the 10-Month MBA program had given him more knowledge about competition in the marketplace. “I learned about market share, competitor strategy, brand advertising, marketing and other ideas to make business successful,” he said. “I really enjoyed this simulation project. In the beginning of the course, when I saw the course syllabus I was nervous about this game. But I did lot of research and read the material about every parameter and field.”



▲ Venu Nagalla

Armsworthy also shared that the game and her classes have provided her with information she was lacking. Her professional experience is in business management with a focus in human resources and marketing. She will graduate from the program in August 2021. “While I have learned about international business in classes throughout my education, I did not have any hands-on experience prior to the Business Strategy Game,” she related. “I enjoyed strategizing with my team and working with the numbers on a larger scale in this simulation to make our company as successful as possible.”

She further stated that her studies in the 10-Month MBA program built upon her experience in business management. “The classes were set up to compliment a student’s prior knowledge and provide a deeper understanding of strategy, communication, and leadership and the related theories,” Armsworthy described. “With this being an online program, I think the instructors did a great job of virtually providing the resources needed for student’s success. I am really glad I made the decision to come back and earn my MBA. I’ve enjoyed my time in this program and I do feel that it has provided me with the education and resources to achieve my professional goals.”

Learn more about the 10-Month MBA program.

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