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HARVARD | BUSINESS | SCHOOL
 SUMMER VENTURE IN MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
 ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

ALUMNI BEAT



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Our Mission and Purpose

The Summer Venture in Management Program Alumni Association (SVMP AA) is a network of talented professionals who are the global leaders of tomorrow. These individuals attended the Harvard Business School Summer Venture in Management Program, which is a highly competitive program the Harvard Business School hosts each summer. In this program, students from across the country simulate the experience of a typical HBS student by reviewing case studies with world-renowned HBS professors. The students graduate the rigorous program at the end of the week and then become official SVMP Alumni Association members.



The SVMP AA organization's purpose is to facilitate the continued success and development of the leaders of tomorrow. We strive to promote graduate level education, career and professional development and community service. Our network of professionals consists of over 600 members who aspire to pursue professional degrees and enhance society through value-based leadership. Companies and recruiters can access our strong talented network of individuals via a resume bank that allows them to pursue our leadership talent. 

Letter From The President



Greetings Distinguished SVMP Alumni Members,

I am happy to introduce the 6th Edition of the Alumni Beat Newsletter. First, I'd like to give a special shout out to Kevin Ko and Mike Finn for the amazing work they have done in getting our alumni involved in the articles. Thank you Kevin and Mike for your dedication to our newsletter.

This June will mark the 30th anniversary of the Summer Venture in Management Program at Harvard Business School. The Alumni Association is currently working with HBS to organize a special event honoring three decades of accomplished alumni. If you are interested in working with us to make this event a success, please feel free to reach out to any member of the board. Additionally, we hope to see you in Cambridge for some SVMP alumni reunion activities during Kickoff Weekend June 15-17. Additional details will be forthcoming. Look forward to seeing you all in June!

Sincerely,

Bridgette Adams

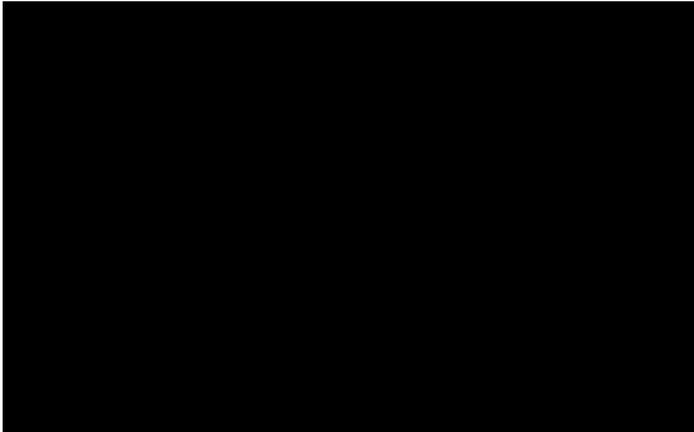
President, SVMP Alumni Association

SVMP Class of 2007

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* SVMP 2012 will be June 16-22. Please help spread the word about SVMP to high-potential college juniors in your network. The online application is now available at www.hbs.edu/svmp





Alumni Spotlight Kevin Ko

An SVMP '09 alumnus reflects on his experiences in the "enigmatic" world of management consulting.

A priest, a rabbi and a consultant were traveling on an airplane. There was a crisis, and it was clear that the plane was going to crash, and they would all be killed. The priest began to pray and finger his rosary beads, the rabbi began to read the Torah, and the consultant began to organize a committee on air traffic safety.

Jokes about consultants are a dime a dozen. A popular quip is that consultants steal your watch and then tell you the time – a stereotype reinforced by Showtime's recent portrayal of the profession in *House of Lies*. Even people close to me don't understand what I do as a consultant. My parents are set on the idea that I'm a financial advisor. Friends imagine me as George Clooney from *Up in the Air*, spending my life on the road firing people. While I have spent 200+ nights in hotels over the past year, I am happy to say that I have never been responsible for anyone losing their job.



So what does a consultant actually do? A "50,000-foot view" of consulting can be summed up as supporting organizational leaders to solve their most critical issues. While accurate, this description is so high-level that it risks being devoid of meaning. At the very least, it raises more questions than answers. The best way I can describe consulting with any level of granularity is by providing anecdotes from my own experience. Since joining Deloitte in July 2010, I have worked on nine projects at eight clients in over a dozen cities. I helped a major insurance plan comply with Health Care Reform. I devised a global reference data strategy at a bulge bracket investment bank. I supported acquisitions in the coal and super metals industries. I developed a health plan imaging solution at a major telecommunications client. I enabled a technology transformation at one of the world's largest hedge funds. Currently, I am advising a large pharmaceutical company on devising clinical trial quality standards. For the sake of brevity and client confidentiality, these examples are hardly robust, but hopefully they provide some flavor of the types of clients and nature of problems for

which consultants are leveraged.

For readers with a healthy sense of skepticism, my experience should raise another question: How does a recent college graduate advise clients on such high profile, complex issues? I'll be the first to admit that I'm no savant in any of the aforementioned industries, but that's the beauty of joining a consulting firm straight from undergrad: No one expects you to be an expert. In fact, I have never been afraid to admit, "I don't know..." so long as I can follow up it with an enthusiastic "... but I will find out." One of the most valuable assets a fresh-faced consultant can bring to the table is the ability to manage change and ambiguity. Over time, this competency enables new





consultants to develop expertise by teaming with others. I have worked with and learned from senior practitioners who have deep industry and technical knowledge. While I may not be a subject matter expert, I am able to contribute to discussions with these specialists by offering a fresh perspective, challenging assumptions and synthesizing findings in a manner that is relevant to the client. By amalgamating a cornucopia of complementary views and skill sets in this way, consultants are able to support clients in solving their most difficult problems.

And now, again for the skeptics out there, the million-dollar question: Do consultants actually create value? With all the jokes made at consultants' expense, one would be apt to ponder their ability to have a meaningful impact. The short (and admittedly biased) answer is yes. "Consulting" is somewhat of a misnomer

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as it implies that consultants are in the business of telling clients what to do. Oftentimes, clients know their own businesses and organizations better than consultants ever will. As such, effective consultants work with their clients to develop a solution in tandem – framing the issue, transforming data into insights, weighing potential solutions and providing a final recommendation. A former senior manager of mine referred to this as "taking the client along for the ride." Ultimately, combining the client's understanding of their organizational dynamics with consultants' fresh perspective leads to a truly impactful solution – one that is not only elegant and comprehensive, but, more importantly, one with the client's buy-in.

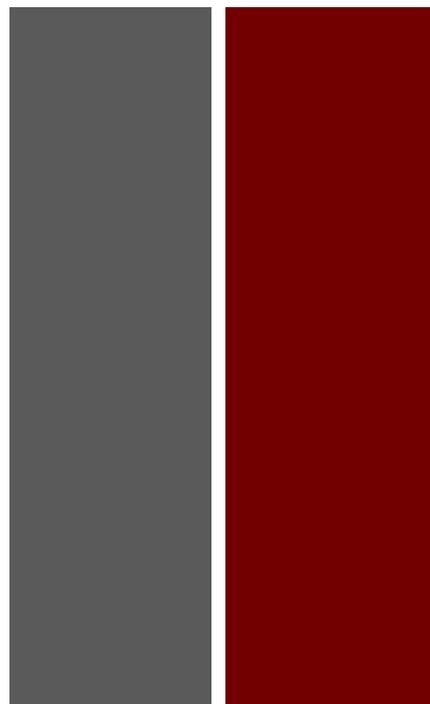
Given the nature of this publication, a discourse on consulting would seem out of place (or at least incomplete) without mention of how this all relates to SVMP. Fortunately, the linkages between consulting and SVMP are plentiful. The goals of consulting parallel those of SVMP – to develop a broader understanding of the challenges business leaders face and the many dimensions of the business world. Each consulting project represents an extended live case study, requiring the same skills that were employed in preparation for and during SVMP class discussions. Clients tap consultants to solve

their most complex, top-of-mind management issues. The "right answer" is rarely clear, and arriving at a workable solution requires the ability "to examine and debate ideas through lively interaction." Sound familiar? Check out the About the Program section of the SVMP site. In many ways, our experience with SVMP was an inadvertent venture into management consulting. While this connection may not have been evident previously, hopefully this exposition has lifted some of the "enigma" around consulting, revealed its meaningful relationship to SVMP and, at the very

Kevin Ko is currently a business analyst with Deloitte Consulting. He participated in SVMP during the summer of 2009, and he graduated from The Wharton School in May 2010. He can be reached for questions or comments at kevinjko@gmail.com

Member Insights Ronald AngSiy

SVMP '11 alumnus and Indiana University Graduate, Ronald shares his outlook on technology



To preface this charged article, I will list off a succinct-yet-substantial personal history to verify the veracity of my vicious declarations. I won a national scholarship for the South by Southwest conference, the same conference that Twitter and Foursquare used to become mainstream entities and the premiere conference for tech entrepreneurship. In addition, I have won a Hackathon in NYC, a tech competition during NYC's "Internet Week" the city holds annually, and placed as an International Finalist for Dave McClure's Venture Capital competition. I have interned at Sonar.me, which placed 2nd in

Techcrunch's Disrupt Competition. I have

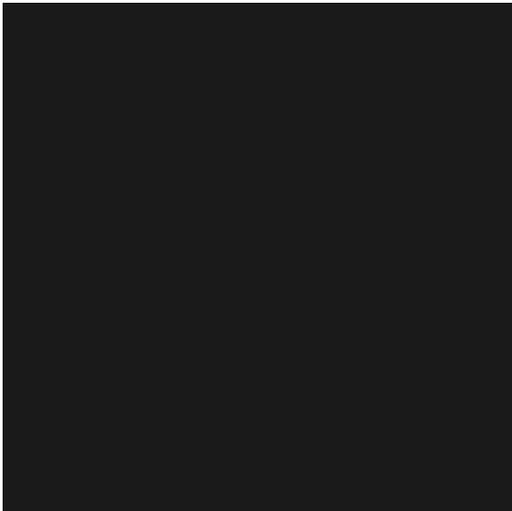
launched a failed startup.

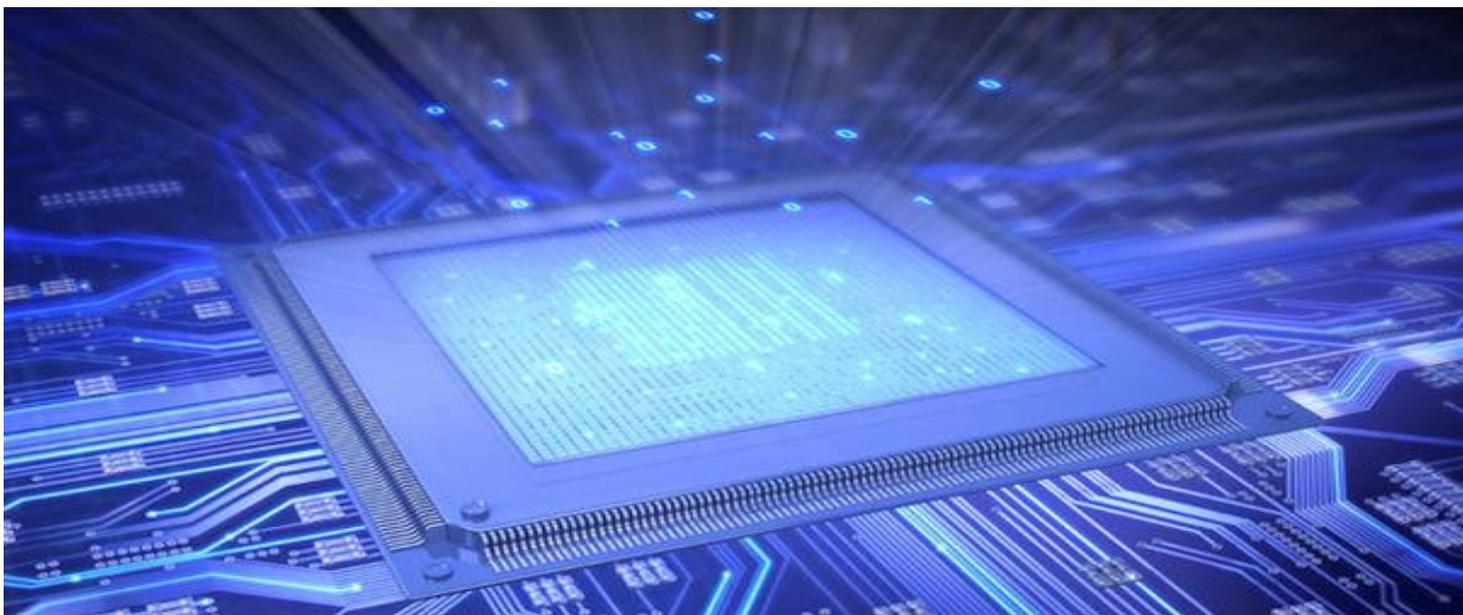
Of that list of accomplishments, guess which one was the most reputable? This question serves as a litmus test for a businessperson. Correct answer? The last one.

I hear this question all the time: "I need a program" or, "I need a technical co-founder." Everyone in the world needs one, because everyone in the world can come up with an idea. However, only a few can execute such an idea.

As a businessperson with a specialization in consumer insights, I realize how difficult it is to understand other people. As such, I spent this past summer attending over 45 tech-related events meant for programmers. I have intensively bonded myself with developer friends at Stanford, UC Berkeley, MIT, Carnegie Mellon, and Caltech. What I have witnessed cannot be quantified by anything other than hearsay, which can become misconstrued as hasty generalization. However, considering the failures of my peers, friends, and strangers alike in executing a successful tech startup, I am willing to risk reputation in exchange for insight delivery.

You should never refer to yourself as a businessperson unless you have direct tie-ins with investors that can give substantial amounts on the spot (6-digit figures). You should refer to yourself as a product person. Product people understand the end consumer and his or her unique needs, whether in business analytics or in the interface of an online gaming site. Business people are clueless non-technical people who do not understand fundamental capabilities of different programming languages, who underestimate the amount of time it takes to construct





and bug-proof a project, and who drown such projects with shady offers every day. As an analogy, imagine if you are a medical student and someone asks you to perform a heart transplant for \$1000. He is clueless as to the general difficulty of finding a heart, the technical difficulty of inserting it without it failing due to a thousand compatibility reasons, the time it would take to perform the procedure, and the cost of such a procedure (he cites a BBC story on illegal Mexican transplant stories as his price point reference). That's what developers feel like when

"Your previous experiences do not matter unless it is an industry-specific site, such as Biotechnology. No one cares about your nice titles at nice sounding companies."

you ask them to do something impossible with a slightly higher budget than you would pay an Indian programmer.

You should never offer to pay someone to program your site. Consider this: Facebook pays its entry level employees up to \$250K; Google pays its entry level engineers over \$130K; eBay pays \$150K as a starting salary; the startup I interned

for offered over \$100K in salary, benefits, and mid-single digit stock percentages. Can you compete with those numbers? Only a fraction of developers can actually take a concept and build the site from scratch. They are superstars, and they are not exclusive to Ivy Leagues. In fact, programming is one of the most meritocratic fields out there, where skill level is completely independent to the individual and not specific to a school curriculum. New York City just ended an immense collegiate competition this year to create a new computer science-focused university in the city; that's how starved the city and this industry has become. If you want to get true talent, you need to get developers to believe in the idea and own it. You can't buy it; you don't have enough money.

Finally, your previous experiences do not matter unless it is an industry-specific site, such as Biotechnology. No one cares about your nice titles at nice sounding companies. Business people flaunt accolades all the time as engraved in the resume culture. Venture capital funding is even nice, but it means nothing if your startup burns through millions in a matter of moments (Color.com, I'm looking at you). Nothing in technology matters other than user adoption. Speak to developers persuasively, not as a showcase to yourself but as a showcase to the concept.

Technology has reached a point where anything you can dream, you can build. However, in order to build, you need to have the right tools. And when dealing

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Alumni Connect Jessika Clerge



About Jesika Clerge:

I completed my undergraduate degree in Economics and English at Mount Holyoke College. Afterwards, I completed my graduate degree at Northeastern University, earning an MS in Nonprofit Management – with a concentration in Accounting. Currently, I am working as the CFO for a small nonprofit named Together Against Malaria (TAMTAM).

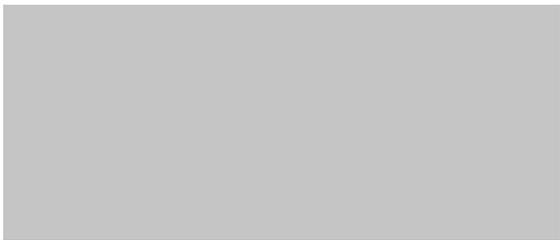
TAMTAM is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization engaged in the protection of pregnant women and small children from malaria. TAMTAM solves urgent malaria challenges by distributing free bed nets to underserved areas through innovative, cost-effective and scientifically founded methods. TAMTAM facilitates operational evaluations with researchers and policymakers to increase the impact of malaria net distribution.

TAMTAM also distributes free bed nets to prevent malaria in a cost-effective, targeted, innovative and evidence-based manner. The organization conducts operational research on bed-net distribution to help improve the use of bed nets worldwide. We are a volunteer organization with zero personnel costs.

With bed nets, a little goes a long way toward saving lives. TAMTAM is supported by many individuals whose generous monetary support goes directly to purchasing and delivering bed nets to individuals in need.

For more information on TAMTAM, please visit our website:

<http://www.tamtamafrika.org/index.html> 



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Thank You From the Editors

To Our Esteemed Colleagues,

We would like to thank you all for taking the time to read this issue of the Alumni Beat as well as extend a special thanks to the alumni who contributed. We are now on our sixth edition – the second with us at the helm. Since this is still relatively new to us, we would love your input and suggestions on what to include moving forward. We also want to encourage you to continue to submit content for future editions. After all, this is OUR newsletter, and, as alumni, you guide the direction of not only the newsletter, but also the organization moving forward.

It's certainly been a fun experience for us, and we cherish all of the lasting friendships and connections we've made with all SVMP classes.

As we near the 30th anniversary of the program, keep a lookout for something BIG coming this June. We have to keep it going, and keep it going strong. After all, the SVMP AA is nothing without the alumni to keep it going. With that, we bid you all adieu, and we look forward to next issue of the Alumni Beat.

- Kevin & Mike

