



# MSBAPM NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2017 Edition



*MSBAPM Graduating Students before School of Business Building in Storrs Campus, UConn*

**Congratulations to MSBAPM graduating students**

# THINGS TO LOOK OUT FOR : JUNE 2017

Karthik & Milind



## A Painter

Shruthi, Spring'17  
BAPM student sharing her love for the paintin..



## A Student

Ayush Kumar, Fall'16,  
sharing his tips on securing an internship



## An Alumni

Xing Wang, Fall'13  
sharing his experience post-BAPM



## A Faculty

7 questions with  
Faculty - Iva Stricevic



## World Culture

Quan Nguyen, Fall'16,  
sharing his Vietnamese culture with BAPM



## Summer Time

Where to go around  
Hartford during this  
time of the year?



## May 2017

A timeline of events in  
May 2017



## See you

Look for this space for  
future updates and  
happenings in BAPM

## Her love for paintings

By Shruthi Murugesan  
MSBAPM (Spring 2017)



I'm truly inspired by this quote and experience this every time I paint one. All my childhood I was fascinated by colors and I really believe that all our likes and dislike, hobbies and a lot more come from our childhood. I started drawing when I was so young in school and won a lot of competition which made me realize I was so much absorbed in this art. I started spending most of my school vacations going to painting classes and enjoyed every bit. I learned watercolor, oil painting and acrylic painting under the guidance of great professional artist and that helped me to learn various nuisance about painting techniques.



“The only time I feel alive is when I'm painting  
— Vincent Van Gogh”



I admire classical Indian style paintings of Ravi Varma and MF Hussain (known as Picasso of India). Mastering oil painting takes time and practice. I'm planning to learn glass painting and Madhu Bani painting (Famous in Mithila region of India) soon and I want to explore all types of

painting at least once. Acrylics and watercolor have always been my favorite painting medium.

Painting is a wonderful way to relax and is kind of a fulfillment. Painting and drawing can take your mind off from stress. When you have created something beautiful and enjoyable, you take pride in your job and get this sense of fulfillment. Every painting takes a lot of time to complete and you need a calm environment and comfortable set up to express yourself. If you possess creativity, you can make art. Be inspired by all the things around you, be spontaneous, and be brave.



## Student Interview

**Ayush Kumar, MSBAPM Fall'16**

Ayush has secured internships with IBM for the role of Data Scientist Intern.

As fellow BAPM students, let us congratulate and get some tips and tricks from Ayush Kumar, BAPM Fall'16 student.

### **Can you please briefly introduce yourself?**

I'm a current BAPM graduate student. I joined UConn in Fall 2016. I worked with Accenture for over 3 years prior to joining the program at UConn. I completed my Bachelors in Electrical Engineering from India. I love playing several outdoor and indoor sports such as Soccer, Table Tennis, and Snooker. I spend my free time exploring new music and reading autobiographies.

### **Where have you gotten an internship offer from?**

I have an internship offer for a Data Scientist Intern role in the Chief Data Office at IBM.

### **How did you prepare for the resume and interviews?**

I believe, a polished resume will take you a long way. I started off with creating a summary of my past work experiences. Next, I filtered out experiences what would be relevant to the positions you are applying for. You can pick from several resume formats and start creating your resume. Once I had a draft resume, I started sending it out to my BAPM alumni friends and professional connections for reviews. These feedbacks enabled me to continuously refine and restructure the resume. As my past work experience wasn't entirely in Analytics, I made an extra effort to work on analytics projects outside the BAPM coursework and highlight them on the resume. I would promote experimenting a little with your resume formats to better showcase yourself to the recruiter.

My interview preparation focused on research about the company, understanding the job description and practicing standard interview questions. Internship interviews will often focus on your ability to explain your past work experience and projects. I created a summary of the projects. The project summary included business problem/solution, data description, methodology, and results. I would always reach out to the HR to ask, ‘What can I expect in the interviews?’. The answer will often have important clues to help you prepare better for the interview. During the interview, I always tried to be calm, friendly and show eagerness about the position by asking questions.

### **What do you think, how the recruiters evaluated your profile?**

Most of my interview calls were through online applications. I had 2 interview calls from employee referrals. I feel having several relevant keywords on the resume helped it to get screened through the ATS. My work experience with Accenture Delivery Centers around the world also helped my profile to be shortlisted. Some recruiters often looked for specific skills such as Hadoop or certifications such SAS certification on my resume.

### **How did BAPM help for securing an internship?**

The program has been vital in securing the internship. I learned several new predictive modeling and data mining techniques from the courses offered in BAPM. The program coursework is useful in highlighting your resume. The courses are tailored to arouse curiosity about topics and guides you to explore further. The BAPM course structure helps you find the balance between your technical and project management skills. The program is an important headway into the Analytics industry. The program helps you develop an understanding of how businesses lend Analytics. This understanding is vital for cracking interviews.

### **What will be your suggestions and recommendations for BAPM students?**

If you are looking for internships it would be an advantage to have your resume ready early and reach out to your connections in the US. It is important to understand that number of rejections will be high for online applications. Rejection is nothing to be disheartened about. Once you get an interview be proactive in your communication and show the recruiters you are very interested in learning about the industry. Stay updated by reading about industry practices and attending company’s info session/online webinars. It is also important to stay in touch with the BAPM alumni who have gone through the same process.



*Ayush on one of his vacations*

## World Cultures in BAPM: Vietnam



*Quan Nguyen*

### **Briefly introduce yourself.**

Hello everyone, I am Quan Nguyen. I have a double major in Management and Economics from Purdue University, Indiana, USA before joining UConn. I am from Vietnam and my hobbies are Soccer, Music, Reading, Food, and Drinks.

### **What are some of the fun facts about your country?**

Vietnam is a 4000-year-old S-shaped country along the coast of the Red Sea (South China Sea). Its neighboring countries are China (north), Cambodia, and Laos (West). The population is over 90 million (14<sup>th</sup> in the world)

Chinese culture influences Vietnamese culture. However, we still have our own language, Vietnamese, and many different cultural values compared to Chinese.

Vietnam is the origin of many world-famous dishes, including Pho (noodle soup) and Banh Mi (sandwich).

Vietnam is the largest exporter of cashew nuts and black pepper. In addition, it ranks second in rice export, behind Thailand.

The most popular vehicles in Vietnam are motorbikes and mopeds.

### **What are the major festivals in your country?**

Tet (Lunar New Year) Festival and Mid-Autumn Festival. Tet marks the beginning of the lunar new year, and Mid-Autumn Festival celebrates the harvest during the autumn full moon.

### **How the culture varies from one generation to another?**

Traditional Vietnamese and Chinese Culture influenced the seniors and elders. On the other hand, people who were born in the period of 1950 – 1980 were a little bit into the Russian and French culture while the young generations are adopting American culture. To sum up, the old generation usually holds traditional East Asian values while the new one is more westernized.

### **How does a family function in your country? Do children stay with their parents once they become an adult or they live separately as we see in American culture?**

Vietnamese people are generally more family oriented and family dependent than Western folks. In Vietnam, parents usually like to take care of their kids until they get married, and children tend to care for their parents when they retire. A lot of people may stay with their parents until they get married or until their parents pass away.

**Is it your first time in the US? What was the cultural shock that you got when you landed in the US for the first time?**

This is my 7<sup>th</sup> year in America. In my first year, I was an exchange student in a high school, and I got to live with an American family for the whole year. Since I never had experience living abroad before that year, it took me several months to get used to speaking and listening to English as it wasn't my mother tongue. Besides that, I didn't have much cultural shock since I am a pretty easy going and adaptable person.

**What are common misconceptions regarding your country?**

Most of the images of Vietnam depicted in American media are related to the Vietnam War or agriculture. As a result, Americans can't quite imagine how it is like in Vietnam nowadays. For example, a lot of my American friends see Vietnam as a place of endless rice fields and poverty. In contrast to that belief, we have rapidly growing urban areas and industrialized economies.

According to PWC, Vietnam will be in the top 20 largest economies in the world by 2050.

**Anything else you would like to add?**

Vietnam is a great country to visit as it is a small coastal country with a lot of mountains and forests. We have beautiful beaches and tropical jungles with great biodiversity. If you are more of an urban person, big cities like Hanoi or Saigon won't disappoint you since there are many fantastic restaurants, bars, concerts, and events there. The options for fun are endless!

**7 Questions with Faculty**

- **Iva Stricevic**

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**A brief introduction about yourself.**

Hello, my name is Iva and I have been teaching Predictive Modeling for the last year and a half. I do have a full-time day job also as a Data Engineer.

**How did you land your first teaching job?**

I was asked if I would be interested in teaching Predictive Modeling (as a former BAPM student) for the Spring 2016 Semester. It was an amazing challenge for me, which I humbly accepted.

**How does it feel to be the part of BAPM Faculty?**

I am grateful to be part of such intelligent, smart and dedicated group of professionals, as the BAPM faculty. Even as a Student I held high respect for the BAPM faculty, and in general UCONN School of Business faculty.

**What are your hobbies and interests apart from making BAPM great?**

I love to read, I like puzzles and love gardening. When I have free moment usually I spent it with my two little munchkins at home.

**Tell BAPM something surprising that we do not know.**

Right after high school, I was studying to become a linguist. I am fascinated till this day by linguistics and in general anything to do with languages. My dream is to study Sanskrit, the mother of all Indo-European languages. Currently, I am able to hold a conversation and read in 5 languages.

**What advice would you like to give to graduating BAPM students?**

Follow your dreams, study hard, network and socialize with folks and don't get locked up on grades. It is the knowledge you walk out of BAPM doors with that matters.

**One thing that you would like to improve at BAPM.**

Through students' feedback of my class, and implementing changes that they suggest, I am hoping to help at least a little bit to make BAPM even greater.

## Learning from the Alumni

Xing Wang (Fall 2013)



**Tell us about yourself.**

This is Xing Wang. I joined BAPM Fall 2013. It took me 2 years to graduate since I wanted to enjoy the perks of being a student as long as possible. Before graduation, I got an offer from Cigna to join the marketing analytics team, which is definitely a good match for me as marketing was my major in college. It was my first full-time job, ever. On my second day, I felt so sleepy after lunch that I decided to sleep on my desk for a little while. 1 minute after I shut my eyes, a teammate woke me up and said: "Do you want to get fired in your first week?" Apparently, nobody can take a power nap in the states, as opposed to China, where HR will even dim the light for you during the lunch break so that everybody can recharge a little bit. Guess what, this is not the only amateur mistake I've made. However, I survived and started to pull my weight in no time. I learned a lot about how different teams collaborate to reach a goal, especially in a large organization. For personal reason, I need to relocate to Texas. Thus, another round of job hunt started at the end of 2016. In March 2017, I joined American Airlines, headquartered in Dallas, as a Sr. Analyst on the Customer Insights and Loyalty team. In my leisure time, traveling excites me the most. I also love trying different gourmet from different cultures,

which makes me realize that once you put on enough weight, you suddenly don't care anymore. I've been enjoying my experience both at BPAM student and after graduation.

**What did you like about BAPM and how can BAPM improve?**

First, I really like the combination of project management courses and analytics courses. Because based on my observation, project-based collaboration is becoming more dominant in the current workplace. I am not saying that you have to map out the critical path for each single project during the first meeting, but it is always beneficial if you are aware of the timeline, scope, resources, stakeholders or even potential risks of certain projects. Second, I enjoyed the freedom to choose from various courses. Different people have different interests. I am not a big fan of programming, so I would lean towards courses which are not designed to improve programming skills. It's really helpful to be able to put together a profile of courses which builds on your strength and interest.

As far as improvement, I would suggest that BAPM host more events where analytics leaders from different industry can be invited to share how analytics is adopted in real world environment and what the trend is.

**In your opinion, which BAPM course helped you the most?**

Predictive Analytics by Ram Gopal certainly built a solid foundation which helped me become an analyst who mastered the process and key techniques in predictive analytics. I am pretty sure most students would still be surprised when they see how massive and messy the real-world data looks like, especially when the data comes from a vendor. The course by Ram gave me the confidence to face these challenges and explore advanced techniques when needed.



Another one would be Intro to PM by Mark. As aforementioned, the key concepts that I took away from this course can help me at least stay on the same page when teammates start to talk in PM jargon. In addition, you can apply what you learned when you are tasked to map out a project plan. Finally, Visualization by John. Tableau is growing its presence in recent years. Even the non-data teams and managers started using Tableau as it's intuitive and efficient. The way John presents during each session sets a good example of how you should present in business meetings.

It's been a while for me, but I am sure I learned something from each course. At the end of the day, it's the cooperation among what you learned in different courses that gives you a unique advantage.

**Please elaborate your job-hunt story. Tell us about your profile now, and what are the areas the current students in the program have to focus on job interviews?**

Based on my own experience, job-hunt certainly involves hard work and even resilience. But one thing I love about job hunting is that it forces you to stay true to yourself and think hard about which path you want to follow. Choosing a job, you love, or at least a job you don't hate truly makes a difference.

I've been blessed to find a job which I'm comfortable with, either at Cigna or at American Airlines. Both jobs are leaning offer a balance of

analytics and strategic thinking. Because my goal is not to become a core data scientist, I am more interested in the business side. Thus, when I apply for jobs online, I can better allocate my time and energy once my interest has been clearly defined. If a position matches greatly with my interests and skill sets, like my current role, I would spend more time and energy customizing my resume. On the other side, limited amount time would be allocated to the positions that I'm less interested in or too competitive.

Once you reach the interview phase, be confident and do your homework on the organization and industry. If you make it all the way to the on-site interview, don't just focus on selling yourself. This is a great opportunity to see if you like the team and the job. Don't be afraid to ask your future managers and teammates what they mainly work on or what potential projects you'll walk into. In sum, stay true to yourself, allocate more time on the positions that you like, do homework before interviews, and know what you are walking into.

**As an alumnus, in what way, would like to be involved with the program? Any suggestions to improve the alumni participation with the program?**

I believe the best way to improve the alumni participation is to improve the current students' participation because they're the future alumni. If a student feels welcomed, supported, and a sense of belonging during their study, chances are he will stay connected with the program after graduation. BAPM is still a relatively new program, like a product, it takes time to grow and mature. I believe the alumni participation will also become better as the program itself matures. In the meantime, I suggest that BAPM organize more events between current students and the alumni on the east coast. In addition, BAPM could push newsletters or other updates to the emails of alumni regularly to maintain the connection.

**How and where you used to hang-out here in Hartford? Any suggestions?**

Blue black square at West Hartford is my favorite area to walk around and have a good meal. There is also a Barnes and Noble where you can grab a Starbucks coffee and curl up with a good book or a magazine. In terms of shopping, I like to go to the Evergreen walk on the east side of the river. It is an outdoor shopping plaza with a good collection of stores. Finally, I like to cheer for UConn basketball teams at XL Center.

**What would you like to share which we haven't asked you?**

Take more naps and travel while you still have time.

## Summer Plans

In this summer vacation, you can visit the following places which are not far from Hartford, CT.

- **Thousand Islands<sup>i</sup>**

Just about 150 miles to the south of Hartford, this location Thousand Islands straddles the Canada-US border. It emerges from the northeast corner of Lake Ontario. As these islands share their borders with both US and Canada, the Canadian islands are in the province of Ontario, Canada, and the US islands are in New York State.

The recommended way of reaching to this beautiful place is by driving a car. You get to experience the pristine beauty of nature. If you don't know how to drive, you don't need to worry about it. There are a lot of public transport options from New York's Port Authority Bus Terminal and Pennsylvania Station, for which you have direct public transport from Hartford frequently.

A mesmerizing view of these thousand islands looks like this.



*Beautiful view from Thousand Islands<sup>ii</sup>*

- **Watkins Glen<sup>iii</sup>**

If you want to explore the countryside of the United States, and especially, international students, then this is an ideal place to visit this summer. Watkins Glen is a village in Schuyler County, New York, US. It lies with the towns of Dix and Reading. A 5-hour drive from Hartford, with few stops in between and a company of friends, is what makes this drive a memorable one. You can explore the nearby area as well along with visiting this beautiful place.

Using car is the only option to reach to this place. So, your friends should know how to drive in the US if you don't have a driver's license like myself. Here's the lovely view of this place.



*Watkins Glen Scenery<sup>iv</sup>*

- **Maine<sup>v</sup>**

Maine is the northernmost state in the New England<sup>vi</sup> region of the northeastern United States. The New England region consists of six states - Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

Maine is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean to the east, so it is famous for its seafood such as clams and lobster.

It is a 5-hour drive from Hartford to Maine, with serene surrounding and a lot of picturesque places.

You can drive through the states of Massachusetts and New Hampshire before entering Maine. Summertime is the best time to visit such a breathtaking place.



*Breathtaking Maine<sup>vii</sup>*

- **Newport<sup>viii</sup>**

All BAPM students must be knowing about this place. It's one the most famous places among the crowd in the state of Connecticut. The state of Rhode Island is adjacent to Connecticut, so it makes an obvious choice for a place to visit.



*A view to die for: Newport*

Newport is a seaside city in Newport County which is approximately 37 miles southeast of Providence, the capital of the state of Rhode Island.

The best way to travel to Newport is by car since it is only a 100-minutes' drive from Hartford. If you want to use the public transport, then you will need to travel to New Haven first, and it takes more than 4 hours from there to reach Newport.

- **Niagara Falls<sup>ix</sup>**

I have kept the best for the last. Niagara Falls is also amongst the most famous destinations to travel not only from this state but across the US.

An interesting fun fact, Niagara Falls is the collective name for three waterfalls. It is located on the international borders of Ontario, Canada and the state of New York, United States.

These three waterfalls are

- Horseshoe Falls
- American Falls
- Bridal Veil Falls

A journey of 6 hours by road is an ideal way to reach Niagara Falls, whereas the public transport takes almost double the time and is not convenient at all. If you do not know how to drive, then you can carpool with others.  
Enjoy this beautiful view till the time you visit this place.



*The world-famous Niagara Falls*

## May 2017 in Pictures:

### Golf Outing

UConn MSBAPM organized a golf outing on April 23<sup>rd</sup>. Faculty, staff, MSBAPM and MBA students enjoyed a lot and had a fun time. It was a Sunday well spent.



*UConn BAPM, MBA students trying their hands at Golf*



*Let me first take a selfie :-)*

## Speak Up! Better Public Speaking Workshop

UConn MSBAPM organized a better public speaking workshop on April 26<sup>th</sup>.

**Kate Callahan** conducted the workshop.

Kate is an award-winning singer-songwriter, most notably the Connecticut State Troubadour and winner of Best Songwriter in Connecticut. She is trained in vocal improvisation and Circle songs by Bobby McFerrin and his master staff. She is also an officer in her local Toastmasters club. Kate tours gives concerts, and workshops throughout the United States.

This workshop focused on the following three things to help students improved their public speaking abilities.

- How to improve public speaking
- Voice Modulation Techniques
- Practice: using improvisation techniques to further enhance public speaking



*Prof. Ram with Kate Callahan and Akilah with BAPM students*

## Celebrations at Citysteam after R Final Class

MSBAPM Fall'16 batch celebrated at Citysteam after their final project presentation for **Data Analytics using R** class taught by **Prof. Ram Gopal**.

Students enjoyed drinks, food, pool table, and of course a lot of conversations.



*Celebrations at Citysteam after R Final Class*

## UConn MSBAPM Graduation

**Alexa Von Tobel** – “For many, graduation marks the end of formal student life – the end of long spring breaks and of thinking that a 10 A.M. class is far too early.”

UConn’s MSBAPM Fall’16 and Spring’17 students did attend the graduation ceremony on May 6<sup>th</sup> at UConn’s Storrs campus’ Gampel Pavilion. Along with students, friends and families came from across the world to celebrate this graduation ceremony. It was a day filled with fun, pride, and emotions.



*UConn MSBAPM Graduating Students keeping the tradition alive*

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<sup>i</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thousand\\_Islands](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thousand_Islands)  
<sup>ii</sup> <https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/originals/3f/cc/54/3fcc540582d18b152ea52463701ca8a1.jpg>

<sup>iii</sup>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Watkins\\_Glen,\\_New\\_York](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Watkins_Glen,_New_York)

<sup>iv</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Watkins\\_Glen,\\_New\\_York](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Watkins_Glen,_New_York)

<sup>v</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maine>

<sup>vi</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New\\_England](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_England)

<sup>vii</sup> [http://www.visitmaine.net/maine\\_blog/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/lighthouse-portland-headlight.jpg](http://www.visitmaine.net/maine_blog/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/lighthouse-portland-headlight.jpg)

<sup>viii</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Newport,\\_Rhode\\_Island](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Newport,_Rhode_Island)

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[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/a/ab/3Falls\\_Niagara.jpg/1200px-3Falls\\_Niagara.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/a/ab/3Falls_Niagara.jpg/1200px-3Falls_Niagara.jpg)