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The most successful careers are made of a series of positions that match our talents to the tasks at hand. To get the right person into the right position, Dominique Brewer, ('04, Psychology) a Takeda Pharmaceutical Company talent acquisition leader, draws on foundational skills she developed earning her [Bachelor of Arts in Psychology](#) at [Governors State University \(GSU\)](#) — right down to meditation techniques she learned in a stained glass art elective course.

“It was not easy!” Brewer said. “But the professor knew that, and he helped us condition ourselves to deal with stress and get through the process.”

Takeda is a Japanese multinational pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical company with almost 50,000 employees worldwide. Brewer, who joined in 2016, manages a team of 30 recruiters. “We work with the executive leadership team on strategy and branding activities to decide how to recruit and who to recruit,” she said.

Getting to GSU

Brewer earned her bachelor's in 2004. She had previously attended Hampton University in Virginia, where she was on track to graduate early until a family illness brought her home to Chicago to help her siblings. Eager to complete her degree in psychology, Brewer began a rigorous review of possible options. "I wanted a place where the work would be applied versus theoretical," she said. A family friend pointed her to GSU. She not only met with Professor Rachel Berg, she audited one of Dr. Berg's courses. The experience led Brewer to enroll. "That's how I approach life," she said. "You do your due diligence and come up with what's best for you. It's a better way to mitigate risk."

Faculty connections

Brewer wound up taking several courses from Berg, whose guidance helped illuminate her professional path. "There was all this theory, but she said you have to know how to apply it. That was already my method but she helped me hone in on it," she said.

In one course, students talked about *Dreams from My Father* by former President Barack Obama, who had yet to run for the Illinois Senate. "It showed what made him want to become an advocate for social justice, and we talked not just about what he did but about *how* he made his decisions," she said.

Faculty across GSU supported students' sharing differing viewpoints. "The way they taught was very empathetic and engaging. They approached the topic so that everyone in the class could get something out of it. The professors at GSU helped create this environment that encouraged you to be curious. Hearing different vantage points helps you decide how to evaluate people and situations. There's not just one right way, not just one linear path. That was definitely something that helped me not just with my schoolwork but with my career."

Family ties

Brewer's son was born while she was a student at GSU, and she remembers how supportive and accommodating the faculty and staff were. And although she had been planning for a career as an attorney, having a child made her reconsider the time away from her family it would require. Faculty members, including Dr. Berg, pointed out other possibilities that started Brewer on her path and have led to a successful career.

Career ladder

On her way to a leadership position at Takeda, Brewer worked extensively in financial services, holding posts at such major corporations as Northern Trust and PwC (PricewaterhouseCoopers), where she worked in talent acquisition. She also worked for top recruiting firms where she specialized in hiring and training staff for investment firms and financial service clients. Working as a consultant, Brewer branched out to the pharmaceutical industry.

A Note for Current Jaguars

While GSU students are focused on earning their degrees, Brewer said, “If I could do it again, I’d enjoy my time in class and being with the people around me. It’s important to take time to focus on creating relationships, because the composition of the network you create is extremely valuable. You can leverage it wherever you go.”