

REMOTE Learning

Mother, daughter get lift from Bryan's online program offerings



Klara Feltl '23 (Business Administration) believes she found the right choice for her family with the Bryan School of Business and Economics. The school not only enabled her to earn a bachelor's degree as a mid-career professional, but now it's providing the best option for her daughter, an alpine ski coach who is working toward an online degree in Finance.

"My mother really liked the program for herself, but when she says she likes it for her daughter, that's a whole other level," jokes Micaela Feltl (Finance).

Micaela attends all of her classes online while she works as an alpine race coach in Utah and travels to visit family, study abroad and explore new places. She stays in close touch with her mother, who is putting her own Bryan School degree to use as a talent acquisition advisor for Merck in the Triangle.

Both mother and daughter are dual citizens of the Czech Republic and the US, and they found the Bryan School adept at meeting their needs as non-traditional students.

"They are anything but ordinary," says April Judge, a Bryan School lecturer and academic adviser who worked with both students. "Klara and Micaela had a strong pursuit of knowledge that was meaningful in their own ways at two very different stages of life. Though they were both earning a Bryan degree, we tailored their experiences uniquely and individually."

Klara, who emigrated from the Czech Republic more than 30 years ago, enrolled first, choosing the Bryan School because of its strong accreditation and flexibility. When she started her coursework in 2018, she was working full-time, parenting her daughter and shuttling her to practices as both an ice skater and competitive skier. The family lives in Wake Forest, NC, and eventually, bought a condo in Utah so Micaela could ski the more challenging courses out West.

"I always wanted to earn a bachelor's degree in the US, so when I found the online program at UNCG, it seemed like the right fit," Klara said. From the very start, she was impressed with how approachable and engaging her professors were, and she appreciated how they connected course content to real life.

Klara completed her degree in business administration in December 2023. She believes it will open the door for further career advancement and values the lessons she learned along the way. "Being an adult learner and significantly older than some of the other students, I learned a lot about different generations and how they think and approach projects," she says.

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MICAELA FELTL
(Finance)

Freedom in Flexibility

When it came time to help Micaela consider where to attend college, UNCG sprang to mind. Micaela considered the University of Utah, but her scholarship offer there didn't allow for part-time attendance. That meant she would have had to commute an hour each way for in-person courses while balancing her work as an alpine race coach and her interest in traveling.

"I wanted a bit more freedom and wanted to focus on coaching and skiing and studying," Micaela says. "Taking classes online gave me a lot of flexibility and really allowed me to be able to enjoy life while getting an education."

She completes four classes each semester and takes advantage of summer and winter terms to stay on pace for her degree. When she enrolled in 2021, she spent her first six months in Prague, where she'd traveled to visit her grandmother. The two went to Spain next because "my grandmother wanted to see Barcelona, and I wanted to show it to her," says Micaela, who loves to explore new places. She spent a Christmas season in France, has been to Croatia for weeks at a time, and has shown family members around California and Costa Rica.

During the winter, she skis daily from 9 a.m. to at least 1 p.m., and sometimes to 4 p.m. She also travels to races with the athletes she coaches, who range in age from 11 to 15. "At the Bryan School, I'm able to do all this without pausing my degree and without missing anything," she says.

In fact, Micaela didn't set foot on UNCG's campus until more than two years after she began her degree. In March 2023, she flew to Greensboro for a study abroad meeting that required her to attend in person. She secured a spot studying at LIUC Cattaneo University in Castellanza, Italy, for the Fall 2023 semester.

Micaela hopes to complete her degree in 2025, and this summer, the family is planning a cruise to Greenland as a belated graduation celebration for Klara. Mother and daughter – who look like they could be sisters – share easy laughs, finish each other's sentences, and have fond memories of their time as students, including a couple challenging math classes where Micaela tutored Klara.

So what's next for this dynamic duo? Maybe some ski lessons for Klara. She describes herself as a beginner, but Micaela clarifies that her mom is more of a "young intermediate."

"She's been coaching me," Klara says, with a laugh. "We've been cracking up over that." ■

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PICTURED:
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