



ST JOHN'S
College

Alumni Outcomes Panelists

April 4, 2020

Peter Bezanson (SF 94) leads all of the day-to-day business of BASIS Educational Ventures and BEV related entities. BASIS Educational Ventures is the holding company for BASIS.ed (the management company for BASIS Charter Schools, one of the top performing and largest networks of K-12 public schools in the country); The Better Education Company (a company dedicated to helping schools, networks and districts capture, analyze and actuate data to improve student outcomes); Academy Partners (a company devoted to developing a seminar-based, and ideologically balanced high school history curriculum driven largely by discussion of primary texts); and other related companies.

Peter's initial professional academic experience was in the classroom, where he taught numerous classes, including courses in calculus, physics, and philosophy. Peter received his B.A. from St. John's College, and his M.A. and Ph.D. in Philosophy from the University of Iowa. BASIS is a family affair for the Bezansons: Peter's wife, Patti, and their oldest daughter both work for BASIS, and his two school-age children attend BASIS Phoenix.

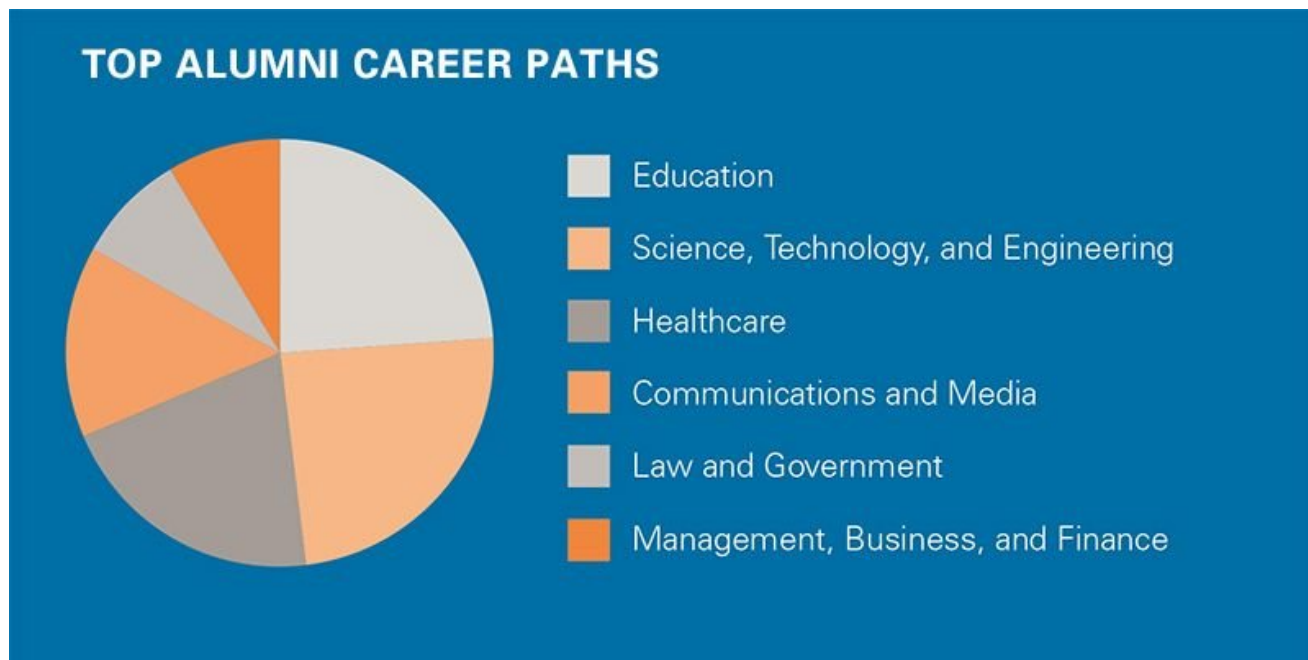
Gigi Escalante (AN 92) is the President-Elect of St. John's College Alumni Association. Gigi is an attorney based in Washington, DC and graduated from Northeastern University School of Law in 2001. Gigi is most proud of her work fighting for the rights of Filipina domestic workers and "mail-order brides." Before becoming an attorney, she was the founding Executive Director of the Filipino American Human Services, Inc. where her work garnered the Banaag Award presented by the President of the Philippines for exemplary service to the Filipino diaspora. While working as a labor attorney, Gigi co-founded the DC chapter of GABRIELA-Network, a Philippine-US women's rights organization. She helped to draft and secure the enactment of the International Marriage Broker Regulation Act of 2005 which helps to protect foreign fiancé(e)s from domestic abuse. Gigi is currently returning to her non-profit roots by consulting for the Mt. Pleasant Village, a non-profit organization that advocates for and supports senior citizens in Washington D.C. She is married to fellow Johnnie Camilo Arbelaez (A'94) and has three children.

Leslie Kay (SF 83) spent a few years doing research at Los Alamos National Laboratory upon graduating from St. John's. She also spent time working as a database programmer in the San Francisco Bay Area, she received her PhD in Biophysics from UC Berkeley. She did postdoctoral research at Caltech and then joined the faculty at the University of Chicago in 2000. She is a full professor in Psychology and is a member of the graduate programs in Cognitive Psychology, Integrative Neuroscience, Neurobiology, and Computational Neuroscience. The research in her laboratory focuses on rat olfactory system electrophysiology, neurodynamics, artificial intelligence, and sensory cognition. Her research is funded by the NIH and the DOD, and she has just recently started to collaborate with over 200 olfactory and taste researchers worldwide to study olfactory deficits caused by COVID-19.

Jamaal Sebastian-Barnes (AN 10) is the Global Head of Digital Talent Acquisition for Novartis and has held roles at Harvard University, McKinsey & Company, and Google since graduating. Jamaal holds a masters degree in prevention science from Harvard University and has been named both a Reynolds Foundation Fellow in Social Entrepreneurship and an Administrative Fellow by Harvard. A long-time youth development advocate, he has served as the president of the Oxford Day Academy in East Palo Alto, CA and on the boards of the Oxford Teacher's Academy (CA), the Touchstones Discussion Project (MD), Crossroads for Kids (MA) and the Coca-Cola Scholarship Foundation (GA).

Richard Smith (AN 90) is the CTO (Chief Technology Officer) and co-founder of OpenPath Products, one the world's first mobile software development companies. A veteran since the late 1980's in gaming, multi-media, and mobile, Richard also holds multiple patents in wireless technology. Along with AN 90 co-founder Johanna Wilson and over 40 Johnnie engineers across 19 years. Richard has delighted in transforming how people interact with one another, their data, and their things. From building early social text messaging services to international chat applications to shared media viewing experiences and peer-to-peer payment systems, OpenPath has had a unique perspective on the evolving intersection of tech and social innovation.

Quick Facts



Ranked #1 for colleges sending the highest number of students to PhD programs in the humanities.

Ranked in the top 4% for sending large numbers of students to PhD programs in science and engineering.

Seniors and recent graduates score on average in the 92nd percentile on the LSAT and GRE.

Over 60% of current students complete at least one internship.

sjc.edu/career-success