



A FIERCE LEADER

Bauer's Head of Business Operations Shares Six Women Who Changed Her Life

By Sara Brown (Intro by Jessica Navarro)

As a Bauer College staff member who has risen through the ranks during her nearly 17-year career, Sara Brown (BS '99, MBA '02) has had the opportunity to grow into a leadership role at an organization that feels like home.

Now the college's executive director of operations, Brown oversees all aspects of how Bauer functions as a business. She is responsible for producing the college budget each year, monitoring all revenues and expenses, overseeing payroll and personnel, supervising business staff and ensuring sound business practices within the college.

Although Brown's work is high pressure, she relieves stress by spending time with her family (including husband Donny and children Ashlin and Jayton) and in the gym — she's a regular at her local 9Round Fitness, often knocking out kickboxing circuit training before heading home in the evenings.

And, when she needs inspiration, Brown often looks to other women in her life who embody qualities she admires, both professionally and personally. Here, she shares with us six women who've changed her life.

Ronan Thompson's Mom, blogger

Through her writing on rockstarronan.com, Maya Thompson unleashed her fury and anguish after losing Ronan to neuroblastoma at age 4. She never tried to mitigate the biting edge of her grief, even when it alienated her and amplified the pain for her friends, family and fans. What has resulted is a deluge of support and beauty, including worldwide attention to

childhood cancer. Maya taught me that taking pain head-on can be much more potent than assuaging it.

Jennifer O'Connell, EVP of Alternative Programming, Lionsgate

Jennifer has had an accomplished career in media by any standard, but the remarkable part is that she is well known for her incredibly kind and compassionate leadership style. So often, women are told that in order to succeed in business, there is no room for "nice." I am moved by Jennifer's influence in unbundling the word "nice" from the words "soft" and "weak." She is paving a path for leaders of any gender to lead with their hearts.

Patricia Tyler, my mom

She struggled with infertility for years, all the while investing her love in children as an elementary school teacher. In April 1976, Pat received a call from the county welfare department that a baby girl born on Easter Sunday was in need of a family. I came home to her when I was 5 days old, and until I had a name, she called me Bunny! Fortunately for me, the name didn't stick and my luck had changed for the rest of my life. Of all the lessons my mom has schooled me in the past 39 years, the first was that sometimes the best outcomes are simply the result of fate.

Allie Brosh, author and illustrator

Allie has a gift of finding humor in even the most tragic or embarrassing circumstances. She has no problem painting herself in an unflattering

manner, if the result is hilarity. Through Allie's work, I've learned that there is little in life that can't be laughed at. And everyone feels better after a good giggle!

Katie John Tucker, literary character

In elementary school, I continuously reread the Katie John series by Mary Calhoun. Those books were very reassuring to me, in that a headstrong, adventurous, often-in-trouble tomboy was valuable enough to be a main character. Katie John gave me confidence to be myself, especially in the ways that were non-traditional.

Latha Ramchand, Bauer College dean and professor of finance (my "work mom")

Of course I considered that it may look contrived to include my boss in this list. But, to exclude her would be a blatant omission. For over eight years now, I've observed Dean Ramchand exhibit strength of character and tireless dedication to the Bauer College. In varying circumstances, I have learned immeasurably from her — I've seen her graciously accept praise, stoically withstand brutal criticism, bring laughter to groups of people large and small, quietly tutor those who are struggling, command conversations with her intellect and passionately defend those without a voice. It is a humbling privilege to work under a leader who propels herself and others toward greatness on a daily basis.