



Real-World Experience Leads to Career Leadership

STORY: DEBBIE BLACK | PHOTO: YOSEF KALINKO

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BRIDGET BREWER, '88

One of three women in her class, mechanical engineering alumna Bridget Brewer, '88, is now President of NIC Global Manufacturing Solutions, headquartered in Woodinville, Wash. With a staff of 650 in four locations in the U.S. and China, NIC Global specializes in sheet metal fabrication and manufacturing, boasting clients such as PACCAR, Philips Medical, Siemens, Merz, Stryker, Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories and Leviton, among others.

“I think engineering is in my blood. I loved math and science as a kid. My father was an engineer, and three of my siblings, including one of my sisters, are engineers,” she said. “My dad was very ‘DIY’ and I helped him work on our

cars. I’m very experiential and I liked that engineering at Seattle U was very physical.”

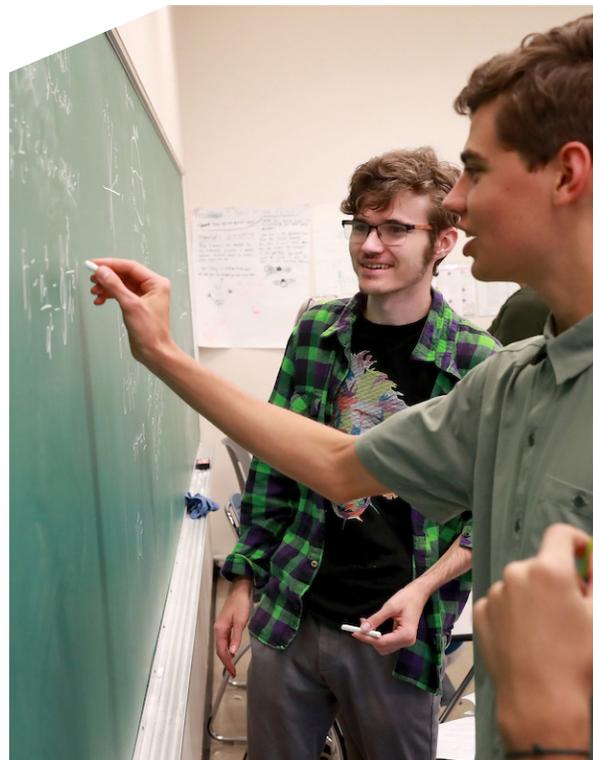
As a senior, Bridget was involved with the Project Center and a real-world problem proposed by center sponsor Kenworth Truck Company. The connection that started with a senior project provided the connection she needed to get her foot in the door at the company—following graduation Kenworth hired her as a design engineer.

In 2000, after 12 years at PACCAR, she joined NIC Global as engineering and materials manager and nine years later was named company president.

SEATTLE UNIVERSITY

Bridget cites Seattle U's engineering coursework and senior capstone project on how they enable students to graduate with the skills desirable to industry leaders and how to be adaptive in problem solving.

"What I gained from Seattle U is the Jesuit concept of questioning and owning my decisions and owning my values," she says. "What's unique about this kind of education is the complete picture: soul, body and mind. The engineering capstone project brings that to a closure. You've learned the thinking part and the technical part of engineering, and you apply that to a problem from the business world. Experiencing that kind of 'real life' while they're still totally immersed in their education helps students become well-rounded professionals."



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