



PASSPORT //
DISTANCE LEARNING

New Students. New Programs.

New World.



Distance learning makes higher education ageless, wireless and tailor-made for adult learners.

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STUDENT FILES

Four adults share their distance learning experiences.

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FINDING YOUR FIT

How to select a program that's right for you.



Did You Know?//

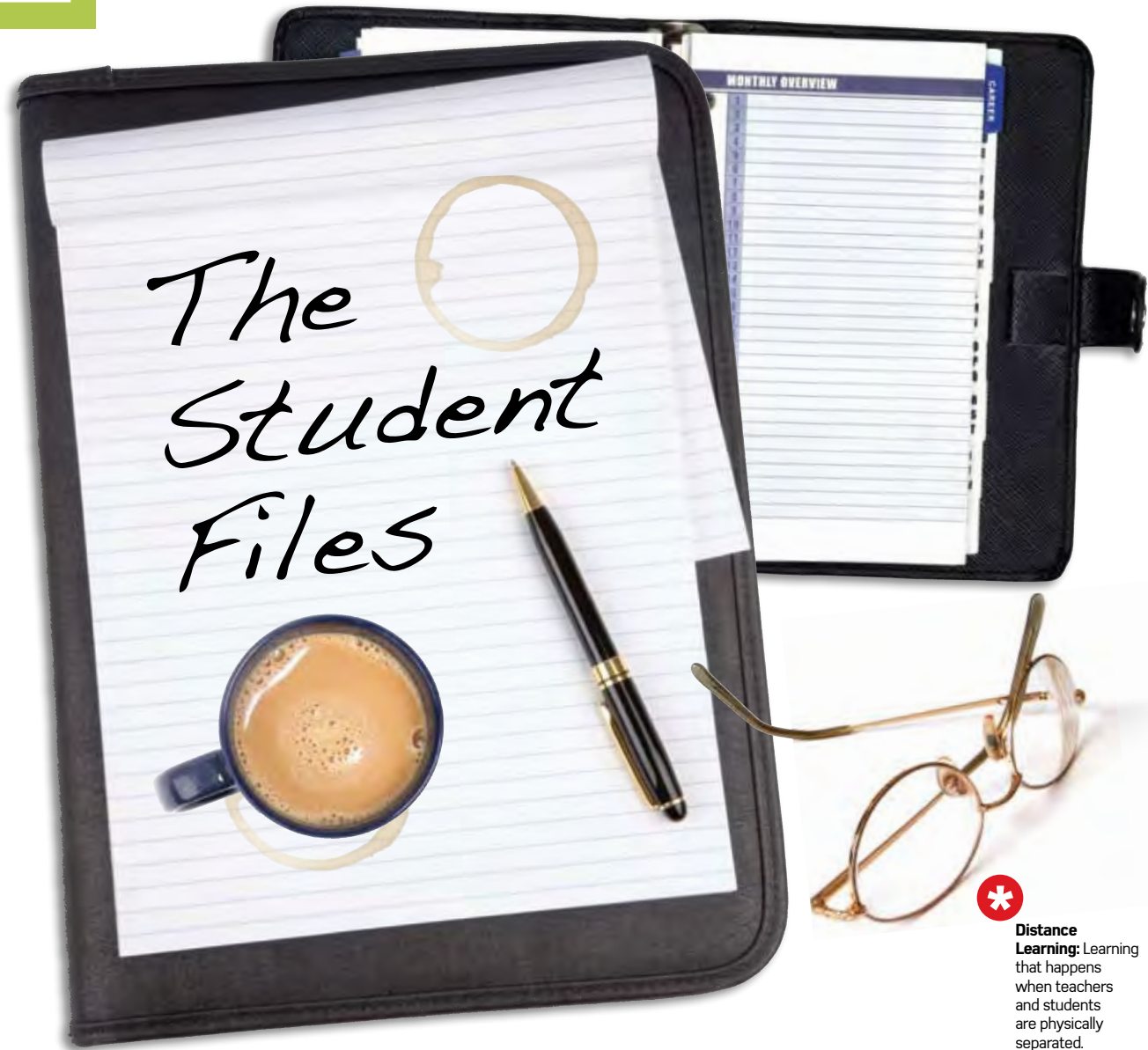
Online enrollments grew **12.9 percent** from 2007 to 2008.

66 percent of accredited U.S. colleges have some form of online learning.

About **4 million** U.S. college students took at least one online course last year.

About **70 percent** of academic leaders believe that the demand for distance learning is growing.

To read this special section online, go to deltaskymag.com.



*** Distance Learning:** Learning that happens when teachers and students are physically separated.

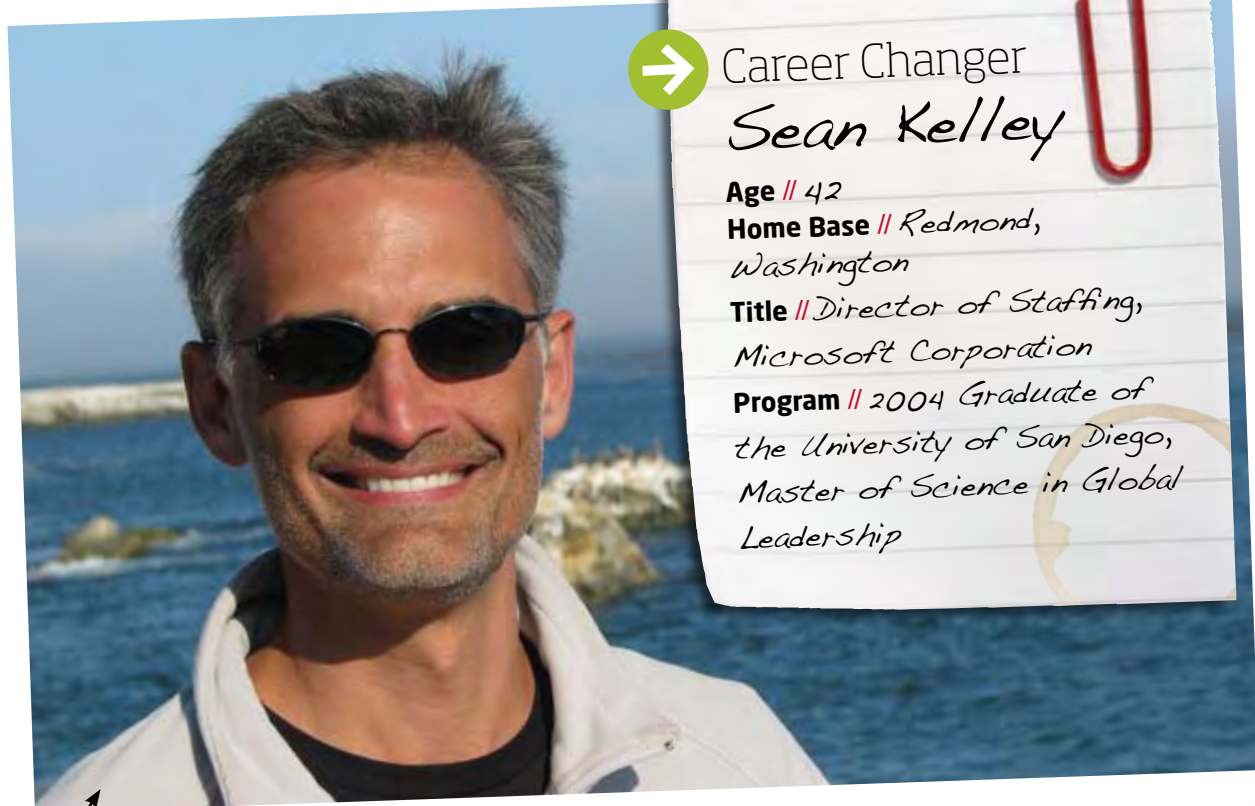
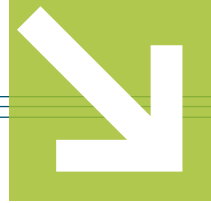
➔ From a career changer to an active parent, we spoke to four adults who improved their lives through distance learning. By Stephanie Wilbur Ash

Rodney Dangerfield went *Back to School* in the 1986 movie as a fish out of water ridiculed by administrators. Today, adult learners make up more than 40 percent of all college students, enrollment for flexible MBA programs is increasing, and more than 20 percent of all college students take at least one course online.

With no, ahem, disrespect to Mr. Dangerfield, today's adult learners are successfully navigating a new college experience. With families and careers to juggle, they're looking for flexible programs that fit their busy schedules.

Universities use distance learning techniques—ways to learn anytime, anywhere—to meet adult learners' needs. And companies value the result: mastery of technology, the ability to solve problems independently and an affinity for working across cultures, borders and time.

Whether you're switching careers, juggling family life or climbing the corporate ladder, distance learning can enhance your life. Here are four prime examples.



Career Changer Sean Kelley

Age // 42

Home Base // Redmond,
Washington

Title // Director of Staffing,
Microsoft Corporation

Program // 2004 Graduate of
the University of San Diego,
Master of Science in Global
Leadership



Sean Kelley earned a distance learning degree to help him change careers at Microsoft.

"Purpose alignment." Those are the words Sean Kelley used to describe his desire for a career change. He was an operations director for Microsoft when he started to reconsider his career track in 2002.

Kelley had been volunteering for diversity and recruitment efforts so much that some of his Microsoft co-workers assumed he was in human resources. That got him thinking: "I'm hitting 18 years of professional work... and what I care about most is how teams pick people and how organizations do what they do," he says.

Kelley went about his career change in a systematic way. "I went to 20 HR leaders in my company and asked what it would take," he says. Many told him his experience was valuable, but that if he got an

advanced degree, it "would round out the pedigree" and people would see that he was serious.

"I was able to put my deep studies to work around the world. I needed the degree to open the door, which it completely did." —Sean Kelley

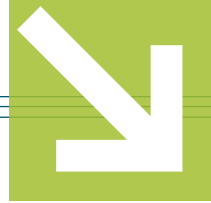
He decided to "give it the old college try," as best as a 37-year-old breadwinner with a wife and two children could. Like all adults, he had responsibilities and parameters when it came to returning to school. "I wasn't willing to go backward or take a pay cut," he says. He also wanted a flexible, relevant curriculum focused on social responsibility. And he wanted it done in two years. "I needed to fit my learning into my life."

Kelley found the Master of Science in Global Leadership program at the University of San Diego.

Online enrollment grew **12.9%** from 2007 to 2008, which far exceeds the **1.2%** growth of higher education enrollment overall.



The University of San Diego's Master of Science in Global Leadership program combines in-classroom instruction with learning via technology.



Executive Dad

Mark
Mayeski

Age // 39

Home Base // Bettendorf,
Iowa

Title // Former district
manager, Citigroup

Program // Current student,
Colorado State University
Distance MBA Program



One night, Mark Mayeski got home from his management-level job with Citigroup in Denver around 8:30 p.m., prompting his 6-year-old daughter to ask him, "What are you doing home so early?"

"I thought, 'Maybe I need to reexamine what I'm doing,'" he says. He cashed out his Citigroup stock options to become the on-duty parent for his two young daughters. However, he knew being a stay-at-home dad wouldn't keep him happy forever. Having also reached a point in his career where he needed an advanced degree to move forward, he chose to pursue an MBA.

Though he was accepted to several programs, Mayeski chose Colorado State's distance learning MBA over a residential program for several reasons. His wife was about to be transferred with her company, John Deere. Furthermore, he says, "the professionalism and warmth with which Colorado State treated me was reassuring. Other schools made it very difficult for me to apply and have questions answered—even after I was formally accepted." The family moved to Bettendorf, Iowa, in 2007, and Mayeski started his MBA "as soon as the computer was hooked up in the new house."

Mayeski learns with the help of streaming videos of lectures, group projects and constant contact with professors—the same tools used in the residential program. "The only difference . . . is that I don't have

to find parking and walk to class," he says. "The online experience I am receiving has destroyed any stereotypes I had about online programs."

The experience will be invaluable when Mayeski restarts his career. "In my work experience, I've gained street knowledge about managing people," he says. "But what I've learned in the MBA is the macro of things. It's given me knowledge I would not have been able to gain by just working."

The experience of getting my MBA while building a stronger relationship with my children has been extremely rewarding. There's a bond now that I never would have had. —Mark Mayeski

Mayeski knows that quitting a great job to pursue an MBA and raise kids "isn't the traditional approach to getting ahead in business." But, he says, it is an approach that's right for the times. As women achieve equal workforce status

with men, two-career families will continue to stretch traditional family roles.

By completing an MBA online while acting as the primary caretaker in his family, Mayeski stays engaged with his career, his wife stays engaged with hers, and their girls stay engaged with their best male role model—who volunteers in their school library, coaches their soccer team and makes their breakfast.

"I can't wait to get back to corporate life," Mayeski says, "but the experience of getting my MBA while building a stronger relationship with my children has been extremely rewarding. There's a bond now that I never would have had."

Mark Mayeski is pursuing Colorado State's distance learning MBA while taking care of his daughters at home.

Finding Your Fit

With so many distance learning options available, how do you choose a program? First, "know thyself," said the ancient Greeks—a pretty good group of people to consult, considering that they were higher education pioneers. Here are some tips for selecting the right program based on your current situation:

// Are you a business professional seeking advancement?

Round out your years in the field with programs that emphasize global communications skills, new technologies and cross-cultural teamwork. Programs such as those at Indiana University, Oklahoma State and Colorado State that include remote interaction with classmates will help you develop these skills.

// Are you a career changer switching gears?

Consider programs that are "dual" purpose—enhancing the career you have and the one you want. For instance, if you're an engineer who would like to move to the executive level within a company, MBAs specifically designed for engineers are great options, as are master's programs in business and engineering. Purdue University has a program of this nature. You don't have to throw away years of experience and connections to get the kind of career you want.

// Are you a parent?

Look for programs with flexible schedules. As most distance learning programs are inherently flexible, this approach to learning is perfect for you. Consider institutions such as Florida State that offer part-time programs or those such as Syracuse University that offer summers-only programs.

// Are you a recent graduate who wants to complete an advanced degree right out of college?

Choose programs that offer internship or mentorship opportunities with highly credentialed professors or real-world professionals. Programs such as Capella University that offer personal "coaches" or advisers will help you grow the skills and connections you'll need. A successful track record placing their program graduates—via a good, responsive career center—is essential. —S. W. A.

Additional Photography Credits //

COVER & PAGE 64 //

Photographer: Cliff Watts. Stylist: Penny Lovell at Wall Group. Assistant Stylist: Victoria Misirli. Blazer by Hugo Boss. Tee by Juicy Couture. Jeans by Levis. All jewelry by Rafinity, Santa Monica, 310-458-3515. Hair: Craig Gangi for Oribe Hair Care at Tracey Mattingly. Makeup: Jake Bailey at Tracey Mattingly.

PAGES 50-54 //

Pg 50: Top left: istockphoto.com; All others: Darko Zagar; Pg 51: Photo 7: Courtesy Folger Shakespeare Library; Photos 7-10: Darko Zagar; Photo 11: Courtesy Politics & Prose Bookstore; Map illustration: Randall Nelson; Pg 53: Photography by Michel Denancé.

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Photographer: Dan Lim. Stylist: Daniel Onori. Hair and Makeup: Susanna Hong. Photographed at the Delta Sherwood Inn, Port Carling, Ontario.

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Photo: Randall Slavin/Contour by Getty Images.

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First Row, Photo 3: From the Theatre of Dionysus. Relief plaque depicting a female dancer. Pentelic Marble. 1st c. BC /Credit Nikos Daniilidis; Photo; Second Row, Photo 2: Jacques Carrey painted in 1674, oil on canvas 260X520 cm; Photo 3: Danylo Hawaleshka; Third Row, Photo 4: Fourth Row, Photos 2 & 3: Danylo Hawaleshka; Fifth Row, Photos 3 & 4: Danylo Hawaleshka



Experienced Professional

Alex Sotomayor

Age // 48

Home Base // Blanchard, Oklahoma

Title // Acting Section Manager and Instructor, Federal Aviation Administration

Program // 2009 graduate of the Spears School of Business at Oklahoma State University

Alex Sotomayor was not lacking in work experience. With an undergraduate degree in aviation management, the former U.S. Marine had more than a 20-year career behind him. He worked as an airport technician, an engineer with McDonnell Douglas and an instructor/project-management professional at the Federal Aviation Administration Academy, where he teaches specialists to maintain equipment that operates our national airspaces.

What he didn't have was an MBA. "I've made very good strategic career moves, and I have a lot of various talents," he says. But to advance, "I realized that good business skills would be required."

He chose the entirely online program at Oklahoma State University so he could continue his already promising career with the FAA. He also wanted to continue providing for his two daughters, who were in college at the time. In the end, he earned far more than a piece of paper.

"[An MBA] is not everything, but it's necessary. Now I have the good academic knowledge to apply to business situations." —Alex Sotomayor

"I felt like I really was gaining insight into upper management," Sotomayor says. "I always felt like I wanted to learn more." It was a change he hadn't anticipated. "I've matured. I know that things won't always go my way, but I know there are many opportunities throughout the world."

This change was partly due to the quality of professors at Oklahoma State. As a longtime teacher himself, he knew the disadvantages of having an instruc-

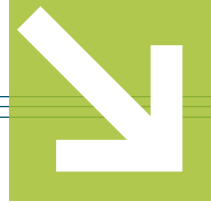
tor with no real-world experience. "Those are not the kind of instructors and professors [I had] at Oklahoma State," Sotomayor says. "[Oklahoma's professors] are experienced professionals who have written books and run major programs at major corporations across the country."

With the all-online route, Sotomayor gained more than classroom experience. He worked with classmates across the country and as far away as the Marshall Islands. He also found added value in the course's digital components, and he kept the video-streamed lectures, notes and PowerPoint slides on his desktop. "I have the luxury of being able to relive the entire experience," he says. "It's provided a toolbox for the rest of my life."

That toolbox comes in handy in Sotomayor's career as an acting section manager at the FAA, with a staff of 18. "It's my first opportunity to use that toolbox to make an impact," he says. "[An MBA] is not everything, but it's necessary. Now I have the good academic knowledge to apply to business situations."



Oklahoma State University's entirely online program allows students to get out of the classroom and learn via technology.



→ Traveling Wife

*Nicole
Bianchi*

Age // 21

Home Base // Springdale,
Arkansas

Title // Student

Program // Working toward
a degree in Organizational
Leadership through Penn
State World Campus



At 21, she's the same age as an average college student—but everything else about Nicole Bianchi is nontraditional, including her level of maturity.

First, unlike most women her age, she's been married since she was 19. Second, her husband is shortstop Jeff Bianchi, who was a Kansas City Royals second-round draft pick in 2005. A

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“high prospect,” Jeff has moved through the system to AA ball in Arkansas, where he’s waiting to be called up even higher.

What makes Nicole even more “nontraditional” is that she and Jeff have stayed together as he makes his way through the Major League system: In the two years they’ve been married, they’ve moved to four states, sometimes with less than 48 hours notice.

“I used to be such a planner, and I’ve had to throw that out the window,” Nicole says. But then again, “I knew I wasn’t giving up anything, because I could pursue my education online.”

Once the high school sweethearts decided to marry, she packed up her dorm room at Penn State Berks and transferred her on-campus credits to Penn State World Campus, becoming an online student and a baseball wife.

“Without Penn State World Campus, I would not be able to live this adventure with my husband.”

—Nicole Bianchi

This means having lunch together before getting Jeff to practice in the afternoon, doing coursework toward an undergraduate degree in organizational leadership until game time, and being ready to move at any time.

“I feel like I’m only gaining by being able to travel and live the baseball life,” she says. “I don’t feel like I’m missing out on anything.” And being able to get her degree while traveling with her husband—who could be released from baseball as quickly as he is called up—means there’s a backup plan for both of them.

Nicole believes she’s matured and grown intellectually, thanks to her online coursework. “I had to teach myself to learn in a different way,” she says. “I can recall things that I learned online so much better. Sometimes I think businesses will look down on me and say, ‘Oh, you went to Penn State, but you weren’t a traditional student.’ But I believe there are benefits: the self-discipline, taking the personal initiative and not being spoon-fed.”

Distance learning is the perfect fit for her for many reasons. “Without Penn State World Campus, I would not be able to live this adventure with my husband,” she says. “We are on this path together, but we can both have things we are working on ourselves. World Campus has given me the opportunity to be a normal student in a very unusual lifestyle.” //



Thanks to Penn State World Campus, **Nicole Bianchi** can earn her degree while following her husband’s baseball career around the country.