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# Profile



## High Fashion

**Vanessa Barcus '05**, owner of ShopGoldyn.com, delivers metropolitan panache to the Mile High City.

JEFF WALKER

# Alumni notes

On behalf of the Alumni Athenaeum Retreat Committee, I would like to take the opportunity to thank the CMC community for their support of a successful gathering at Beaver Creek.

The enclosed picture from a biking excursion, snapped by Alissa Sandford, pretty well says it all. After a morning's worth of conversation, a number of us sped away on a cycling tour of some nearby scenery. Professors, alumni, trustees, current, and even prospective students laughed and had a great time together. Age and seniority didn't matter, since we all shared the CMC experience and truly enjoyed each other's company.

The experiment of the Alumni Athenaeum had to do with seeing what would happen

## CMCAA President's Message

It is an honor and opportunity to return as president of CMCAA. It is an honor to represent such a high-caliber cohort of amazing people. The opportunity comes from meeting so many alumni, hearing their stories, and making new friends. This position is an extrovert's dream.

Summer was thick with CMC alumni-related activities. It started with a huge Alumni Weekend on campus, followed by a volunteer party celebrating the work of our alumni volunteers. Next was an amazing Alumni Athenaeum

Retreat at Beaver Creek at the top of the Rockies, and the summer concluded with a CMCAA Board strategy session where we worked to make this year even better than the last.

Your CMCAA Board is focused on a range of issues, including the timing of reunion weekend, social networking strategies, alumni contribution rates, chapter enhancements, and involving more alumni in campus activities. This is in addition to routine services such as career advice, Student Alumni Relations Council, and Class Liaisons programming. The Board is busy, but we need your

feedback, which is always welcomed.

As mentioned, social networking is a significant element of our overall alumni outreach strategy. With over 250,000,000 active users, including a large swath of our alumni community, Facebook is a major component of our alumni communication strategy. Recognizing this, the CMCAA launched a revamped Facebook page during the summer and has already garnered over 1,000 fans. Between Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter, we are leveraging all the social networking tools to conveniently engage our alumni population with CMC-specific content.

While keeping in touch virtually is important, face-to-face is always better and the Alumni Athenaeum at Beaver Creek delivered. Nearby you can find a report from CMCAA President-Elect Richard Voit '78 about the Alumni Athenaeum. Rick demonstrated the kind of pioneering leadership that is a hallmark of CMC alumni. My thanks to Rick for his leadership and the critical support provided by Carol Hartman '86, Harry McMahon '75 P '08 '09, John Faranda '79, and the Alumni Athenaeum Committee.

*Crescit cum commercio civitas,*

**Ryder Todd Smith '96**

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if we assembled our diverse clan at a world-class retreat and just, well, played. It was terrific! Feedback from the 50 participants was all incredibly positive, with everyone taking away something slightly different. It was the chance to indulge in lively, fast-paced conversation led by colleagues who are truly exemplary people, professionally and personally. It was also the small things—such as evening s'mores around the Hyatt's "campfire," and having Surin Pitsuwan '72 proudly announce that Victoria Din '10 had taught him to "tweet"—that made the difference. Many new friendships were forged at Beaver Creek.

As a committee we are also grateful for Jessica Briggs '03 of the Kravis Leadership Institute for leading 10 youngsters in a parallel leadership program. Why? Because the weekend provided the chance for the kids' introduction to CMC excellence. There are more than a couple of stories about less-than-enthusiastic teenagers on Thursday night, who by Saturday and Sunday were giving presentations and, in one case, persuading their parents to extend the visit.

Truly, it was all good. Carol Hartman '86 will be leading the charge as we capitalize on the good time we had in July in preparation for next year.

**Rick Voit '78**

Alumni Athenaeum 2009 Chair



**GIRL GOLDYDYN**

JEFF WALKER



Dinner at the home of Harry McMahon '75 P'08 '09, chairman of the board of trustees



Voit fly fishing

**Vanessa Barcus '05 grounds a passion for fashion with business savvy.** BY HUGO MARTIN

Conventional wisdom says that Vanessa Barcus '05's clothing business shouldn't be a success.

After all, she is a first-time business owner who has launched a unique venture amid the worst recession in a generation.

Still, Barcus' online clothing store, Goldyn, continues to thrive, thanks in large part to sheer determination and her economics training at Claremont McKenna College.

Barcus has always loved clothing and style. So, shortly after graduating from CMC in 2005 and earning an MBA from Claremont Graduate University, she decided to combine her creative, fashion-loving side with her business savvy. The result was an online enterprise that sells women's clothes, shoes, and accessories by dozens of independent designers at affordable prices.

Joining forces with fellow fashionista Melissa Gelfand, Barcus created a Denver-based business designed to compete with the high-end boutiques in Los Angeles and New York.

But Goldyn is not just an online store ([www.shopgoldyn.com](http://www.shopgoldyn.com)). Barcus also brings clothes to private homes in party settings at events known as trunk shows, and occasionally takes over a

vacant brick and mortar store temporarily, in what she calls a "pop up."

"The concept was always to do something out of the box and non-traditional," she says.

That may be one reason why her business has succeeded.

"Some products and services are relatively recession-resistant, and clever choices about product lines and market segments to target could lead to success," says Darren Filson, an associate professor at the Robert Day School of Economics and Finance at CMC.

Because her business isn't weighed down by the costs of a store-front business, Barcus says she can offer bargains to customers with a taste for stylish but unique clothes.

Still, the global recession has made it tough to keep her dream alive. She relies on her CMC training to keep a close eye on expenses, inventory, and opportunities to expand her customer base.

She adds: "The creative stuff comes naturally but the training I got at Claremont for the finance, accounting, and strategy really provided a great foundation for starting a business."