



## YMA FASHION SCHOLARSHIP FUND

**Breakfast with the Boss- July 9, 2014: Heath Golden, President of Bendon, Western Hemisphere**

*-By Jenna Liss*



### **“15 things I wish I knew when I was your age”**

Scholars had the wonderful opportunity to join Heath Golden, President of Bendon Group Limited, Western Hemisphere, for breakfast at their modern and chic New York headquarters. Heath earned a B.A. in History at the University of Pittsburgh before acquiring his law degree at Temple University. After working at quite a few prominent law firms as a corporate lawyer, Heath decided it was time for a change. He then entered the apparel industry when he began working at Hampshire Group as Vice President of Business Development & Administration and subsequently President and Chief Executive Officer. Currently, as Western Hemisphere President of Bendon, a world leader in intimate apparel from New Zealand boasting brands such as Elle Macpherson Intimates and Stella McCartney Lingerie, Heath is responsible for leading Bendon’s business, including developing retail and ecommerce strategies, for North America.

As a young and successful leader at Bendon, loving husband and father of two young girls, active YMA FSF board member, and triathlete, Heath definitely has his hands full. However, it is clear that he has mastered the art of doing it all, and through prioritizing and time management he is able to make meaningful contributions to all of these areas.

Heath has accomplished so much at such a young age and was kind enough to share his wisdom and experiences with scholars, including his list of “15 things I wish I knew when I was your age”. Scholars walked away with invaluable advice that will carry them through any professional realm and all walks of life.



**(Q): Fabriana Watts-** What would your advice be as far as trying to choose between a career path that is more strategic and one that is more passion based?

**Heath-** The answer changes as you get older and have more responsibility. As young professionals, you're in the position to be more passionate now. Take advantage and go after your passion while you have the ability to do so.

**(Q): Hannah Aylward-** When you're looking to hire someone, what are the key things that you look for?

**Heath-** I look for people who will be humble and work really hard. I would take anybody even if they went to school for something completely unrelated if they expressed a sincere desire to succeed and do whatever it takes. I want someone who constantly asks, what can I take on, when do you need it done, and how great can I do it. In an interview process, it's incredibly important to show that you want to learn as much as you can and you want to make *them* look better.

**(Q): Maria Catalano-** As an intern, how do you put yourself into situations to be a leader?

**Heath-** Show them that you want to do it—remind them that you want to take on more and people will naturally gravitate to that. Beyond that, when there's more than one person assigned to something when you're part of a team, in any group, someone has to do it. A natural leader is the one who does it. If you show that you want to lead in a respectful way, not because you're power hungry but because you're good at it, people will respect that. Through being authentic, showing that you know what you're talking about in a humble way and communicating that you want to make the whole team look good, you will naturally fall into a leadership position. ***Be selfless and let others take credit for things because smart people above you will know who did the work.***



**(Q): Elva Jiang-** How do you make meetings more efficient?

**Heath-** Don't let people put their smart phones on the table, have an agenda, stay focused, and follow up with people to make sure deadlines are met.

**(Q): Jill Hub-** Sometimes it can be intimidating to reach out to professionals in the industry. What is your advice for reaching out just for the sake of keeping in touch?

**Heath:** Anything you send, as long as it is grammatically correct, will be fine. If you send an email at least once, your name will start to stick. Don't be intimidated. I'm here because I want to be helpful in anyway I can. I think humanity will surprise you —most people want to be helpful. Many got where they are because somebody helped them, so they want to pay it back.



***Heath's Words of Wisdom:***

“You don't know it all”

“Respect everyone at every level of an organization”

“Check your ego and be willing to roll up your sleeves and do anything”

“Work harder than everybody else”

“Find time to travel and get to as many different countries as you can”

“No matter what career path you take, you're always a salesperson—everyday you're selling something, at a minimum, yourself”

“Seek out feedback”

“Put yourself in a position to be a leader”

“Take risks”

“Go after your passion”

“Incur as little debt as possible”

“Don’t be a complainer”

“You’re a brand—approach your network of people like it’s a job”

“Never burn bridges”

“Keep in touch with everybody”

“Join professional organizations”

“Social media is permanent”

“Have an elevator speech”

“Always look professional—look nicer than your peers”

“Be present”

“Write hand-written notes; less than 1% of people do this and it is incredibly impactful”



I hope you enjoyed!

Thank you,  
Jenna Liss

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