

Travelin' Man

Ron Cruse '77 A&S is helping Villanova students to think globally

When Ron Cruse first arrived on campus as a Villanova freshman in the fall of 1973, "I was a rarity," he laughs. "I had an Oklahoma drawl and said 'y'all' a lot. My buddies from Long Island and North Jersey were fascinated."

Leaving Oklahoma for the East Coast was the first step in what has become a career of successfully navigating new waters. The founder, president and CEO of Logenix International, a global logistics provider, has had a front row seat for nearly every world crisis since 1987.

The global entrepreneur has conducted business in more than 80 countries around the world—often at critical times in their histories. In 1992 he entered Russia just months after the collapse of the former Soviet Union, organizing one of the very first US-Russian joint venture companies—which quickly became the largest privately held freight forwarding operation in the new independent republics.

Logenix has assisted in the rebuilding of Afghanistan and reconstruction of Iraq and served as an integral facilitator supporting health and humanitarian assistance efforts across Africa and Asia.

Now Cruse is sharing those experiences with Villanova students. "He is a dedicated advocate of global business education who has contributed enormously to the programs and initiatives at VSB, and his personal involvement and experiences have been eye-opening for our students," says Jonathan Doh, PhD, the Rammrath Chair in International Business and director of the Center for Global Leadership in the Villanova School of Business (VSB).

INTERNATIONAL ROOTS

Cruse gravitated toward a career that would take him out into the world. His mother was a Scottish war bride and member of the Women's Royal Naval Service; his father an American captain of a landing craft that delivered Allied troops onto Omaha Beach on D-Day. People from all over the world visited the Cruse home.

Cruse attended Cascia Hall, an Augustinian preparatory school in Tulsa, Okla., and "I liked it

so much that Villanova seemed a natural extension of that experience." He quickly felt he'd made the right choice. "My memories of Villanova are fabulous," he says. "I strongly related to the Augustinian way—to be ambitious but at the same time down to earth, to enjoy life and do unto others as you'd like them to do unto you."

At Villanova he honed his communication skills. "Nobody is successful in today's world without learning how to interact well with others. Effective communication—especially when doing business in a different culture—is key to getting things done."

He also learned organizational skills, according to good friend William Donnell '77 VSB. "Ron became treasurer of our fraternity, and as an 18- or 19-year-old was managing a budget of \$100,000 a year. He did a great job then—and he's doing the same today, just on an international global scale."

After graduation Cruse landed a job in the international shipping industry. Over the next 25 years he traveled the world and eventually built three successful multimillion-dollar companies.

HELPING VILLANOVA STUDENTS

During that time he realized how important it was for young people to gain international experience. (His son Alex "Bo" Cruse '12 A&S studied in Greece this summer.)

He has written a book, *Lies, Bribes and Peril: Lessons for the Real Challenges of International Business*, and established The Cruse Endowed International Fellowships at Villanova, which enable undergraduates in VSB and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to participate in nontraditional global work and study opportunities, with an emphasis on destinations in the developing and emerging regions of the world. This year's recipient, Casey Richards '14 A&S, spent the summer with the State Department's Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs in the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

Cruse says, "It's an international marketplace—we're all tied together now. To help students understand that is meaningful to me." ■

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