

# Pass the pen: Alumnae nominated spotlight



**As part of an ongoing series, we give alumni a chance to share their favorite GPS memories**

By Rachel Hommel | GPS News



In this new series, we ask alumni from the UC San Diego School of Global Policy and Strategy (GPS) to share a more personal side of themselves by answering seven or more questions from a potential list of 15. This will be a quarterly spotlight with the alumna or alumnus in the spotlight passing the “virtual pen” to the next person.

This month we feature alumna Liliana Pao, MPIA '02 who works at the European Commission in Brussels, where she designs and manages communication and

talent management strategies. An active member of the school's alumni board, read on as she shares highlights of her career and how she uses her GPS toolbox along the way.

**Q: A highlight of your career so far. □**

A: A fun and memorable moment was sitting in the cockpit of a mock Joint Strike Fighter at an air show to the astonishment of most visitors who were wondering who I was and why I got to go up there.

**Q: A favorite thing or memory of your GPS experience. □**

A: 5 a.m. project handover calls. I had a fantastic project partner for several classes who was an early bird whereas I was more of a night owl. We'd finish projects really quickly because we worked around the clock. Before I went to bed, I'd give her an update and she'd take it from there and then update me in the evening so I could continue working on it.

**Q: Most memorable class or professor or project at GPS. □**

A: Strategic Marketing with Professor Phil Parker. At the time, he worked at Insead in Fontainebleau, France, and would fly in just several times per quarter for marathon lectures. He was such an engrossing speaker that we were all paying full attention even after 10 hours of lectures in a single day!

**Q: What book/movie have you read/seen recently and would recommend? □**

A: "Why We Sleep" by Matthew Walker. You'll regret pulling all those all-nighters in college when you realize what that does to your brain and body.

**Q: What experience should alumni not miss when visiting your city? □**

A: Eating street waffles and tasting the best chocolate in the world on the Grand Sablon square in Brussels. I'm happy to make recommendations to any alumni visiting!

**Q: A memorable travel experience you'd like to repeat. □**

A: A few years ago, I traveled to northern Finland, well within the Arctic Circle, to see the aurora borealis and enjoy unbelievable amounts of snow and breathtaking landscapes.

**Q: What do you miss the most about your days in San Diego or more specifically GPS? ☐**

A: The sunny, laid back atmosphere. And again, the sun. I cannot emphasize it enough, as I live in a country in which we clocked a total of 10.5 hours of sunlight over the entire month of December last year!

**Q: Who would you like to pass the pen to and why?**

A: Leslie Bell. She was part of the Europe Alumni Chapter since day one and we really miss her here! I'd also like to know if she's still throwing the best BBQ parties!