TRACY REGAN
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF THE PRACTICE, ECONOMICS

Where did you grow up? Why aren’t you there now?
I’m from Denver, CO but after spending 25 years in AZ and FL I decided it was time to return back to winters with snow! In all seriousness, though, I love the warm welcomes I’ve received from Bostonians and the BC community. This city has a tremendous amount of pride and is an exciting place to live.

What path brought you to BC?
I spent eight years as an Assistant Professor at the University of Miami and two years at the University of Arizona where I got my feet wet teaching large lectures. I chose to join BC as my position here allows me to focus on teaching, while also allowing me to do my research at a more reasonable pace. BC offered me the opportunity to continue teaching large lectures but also to offer electives in my areas of interest—namely, health economics, industrial organization, and labor economics. BC is the ideal mix for me—it’s an outstanding research institution but maintains the focus of a liberal arts institution with a wonderful student body and an impressive faculty and administration.

What are you most passionate about professionally?
A lot of my passions are reflected in my research and teaching. I am especially interested in minority groups—e.g., women, Hispanics, and Blacks—with respect to schooling, the labor market, and the family. Matters of language fascinate me too. My other interests are in the health care arena; the pharmaceutical industry intrigues me, as does our evolving health insurance market. In recent years I’ve grown especially curious about the informal economy and entrepreneurship as well.

Where can we find you when you’re not working? What’s your favorite way to spend a weekend or Sunday afternoon?
I love exploring New England—there is so much to see and everything is so close. Day trips are definitely a favorite weekend activity. I’m also a big fan of picnicking by the Charles River during the summer. I always try to exercise, get some work done, see friends, and take in some cultural events, as well as catch up on sleep. And occasionally, you’ll find me on the couch all day binge watching something on HBO or Netflix!
Any volunteer activities you’re crazy about?
I’ve been very involved with my sorority’s alumnae chapters since graduation, serving in various executive roles. I also had the opportunity when I was back in Tucson to be an advisor to my college chapter at the University of Arizona. There I mentored women and served as a formal advisor to the CMO, philanthropy chair, and alumnae liaison.

Who is your hero? Why?
I don’t have a hero per se, but instead a collection of people whom I respect and admire throughout history. These would include, but are not limited to: President Obama for his integrity, class, and respect for the office; Martin Luther King for his peaceful approach to civil rights; FDR for his public works projects; Teddy Roosevelt for his conservation legacy; Mother Teresa for her service to the poor and suffering; Malala for speaking out for the right to an education; Steve Jobs for his vision; and Walt Disney for his creativity.

Who is your mentor? How did you connect with them?
I don’t have a formal mentor but I have a group of people who have advised and helped me at various points in my life. My undergraduate mentor, who was my professor when I was in college at the University of Arizona and oversaw the graduate students when we taught classes as Ph.D. students, was always candid, opinionated, and quite humorous in our conversations and has provided a tremendous amount of support and guidance for me as a professor.

My graduate advisor, Ronald Oaxaca, has provided a great deal of encouragement and guidance and has become a dear friend and a wonderful sounding board when I’m faced with challenging professional situations. My parents are entirely selfless and endlessly patient and have given me advice for every imaginable thing in my personal and professional life. My siblings are my best friends and I often seek them out for their advice and opinions. I am incredibly lucky to have a family that really defines the notion of a family. And lastly, I’m fortunate to have a large network of friends that I’ve relied on throughout the years.
What’s the most unusual place you’ve visited?
Probably Turkey. Istanbul is at the literal and figurative center of so many things—geography, culture, and religion. It is the furthest east I have traveled and provided my first entry into Asia. I was fascinated by the women in various types of hijabs that walked next to men in nondescript clothing. It is truly where the west meets the east. The number of mosques dotting the countryside is amazing and the views from the Bosporus are memorable. There is constant chaos and activity punctuated by the daily calls to prayer and endless array of amazing food, passionate people, and incredible sites.

What would be impossible for you to give up?
Summer vacation, my yoga mat, dental floss, my iPhone, and water.

What’s one thing you want to accomplish before you die?
I hope to see and experience as much of the world as possible. I also hope to have some positive impact through my teaching and interactions with people.