



## **Julianna Masseria**

Throughout my years in Quinnipiac's 3+1 BS/MBA program, I am proud to recognize that I am one of the program's strongest female students. However, I didn't always have the courage to use my voice during class discussions, take the lead in group settings, and be excited to present and public speak to a class.

Back in my sophomore year, I was lucky to acquire a remote internship at a small NYC start-up company, Vestium, as a marketing intern. Although I was presented with a few opportunities, the opportunity with Vestium felt different. I could feel the excitement, passion, and motivation of the woman on the other line of the phone. Once I accepted the internship with Vestium, I soon learned that the interviewer was the CEO of the company.

During my first day of work, my boss, the CEO, took almost two hours to explain her background and inspiration for the company's inception. She talked about how she left everything behind in her home country, Ukraine, to come to America and embark on her dream of starting her own business. I learned that my boss struggled for many years to be accepted by her friends and family back at home because this was not the typical expectation for a woman; Women were expected to adhere to traditional gender standards such as cooking, cleaning, and staying home with the children.

The frustrations of the 'glass ceiling' in the Ukraine only made my boss more and more passionate to make a difference through Vestium. Now, the company has over 28k social media followers, launched a new website, and is proud to provide high-end custom clothing for men and woman. The idea of Vestium is to break traditional standards and convey 'Own Your Choices' and 'Own Your Style.' Vestium has made me realize that business serves as an inspiring platform to showcase creativity and make a difference.

Working closely to an amazing woman in business allowed me to recognize that I am passionate about business because of its empowering environment of endless opportunities that infuse self-drive and strong momentum to create something special. Being in the accelerated business program at QU, I was always intimidated by the number of male students in my courses. Instead of allowing this to hinder me, I let it be my driver to accelerate ahead. Through building the courage to showcase leadership, leveraging conscious interpersonal skills, and remaining authentic in my work, I graduated first in Quinnipiac's 2021 Business Class in just three years—an achievement I never thought was possible. Along the way, I know I have made my professors proud and have inspired many of my peers to achieve their goals too.

Receiving the Kathleen Simione PUCWB Women in Business Scholarship will help me reach my goals of becoming a leading sales representative in the healthcare industry and eventually launching my own mentorship business because it will alleviate a portion of my student loan debt after graduation. I am currently supported by a single mother with two other daughters in college. I believe my desire for life-long learning and inspiring others in business makes me an ideal candidate for this scholarship. I would like to thank you in advance for your consideration of my application.