

# ALUMNAE ENTREPRENEURS MAKE THEIR MARK

## *Passion is the Key Ingredient*

### YASAMAN VOJDANI '08



Mixing granola with career might seem unlikely, but for Yasaman Vojdani '08, it's the perfect blend. Yasaman is the co-founder with her mother, Shohreh

Vojdani, of "Oat My Goodness" craft granola ([www.omgcraftgranola.com](http://www.omgcraftgranola.com)).

When Yasaman was a sophomore at George Washington University, her mother started making granola and brought batches to Yasaman's sorority house for the girls to enjoy. The response, Yasaman recalls, was always "Oh my goodness, it's delicious, you have to sell this!" While studying abroad in Barcelona, Yasaman's entrepreneurship class inspired her to develop Oat My Goodness (OMG) into a genuine business and after she returned she began selling to friends locally. Graduating from GW in 2012 with a business degree, Yasaman relocated to New York City for a jewelry sales position at Marc Jacobs. Unwavering in her commitment to launch OMG, she worked on the side, developing marketing, product packaging and working with a graphic designer. While apprehensive to leave her job's security, Yasaman says her

father encouraged her to focus on Oat My Goodness full time. A year later, she did just that.

Securing a booth for Oat My Goodness at the Fancy Food Show, a major specialty food and beverage show, in January 2014 was a pivotal step—and OMG has gone full steam ahead since. Now the product sells in over 40 Whole Foods, through specialty grocers, the OMG website and on Amazon.

What distinguishes OMG from other granola companies? "Our products are made with olive oil, without butter and we don't add salt—my mom is adamant about this! Additionally, our flavors are unique, including batches with cardamom and orange blossom among others."

Yasaman's seven years at Bullis influenced her life in many ways, particularly because of positive relationships with teachers whose lessons still guide her today. "Mr. Glenn Hunter was a tremendous teacher—I grew as a student and became extremely organized.



His note-taking methods carried me through college and remain part of my daily routine."

Though she attended Bullis before the Entrepreneurship program was established, she felt supported and encouraged to try new ventures. Ms. Faith Darling mentored Yasaman when she started the N.I.H. (Nurturing in our Hearts) club for the Children's Inn at the National Institutes of Health focusing on creating art projects and holiday parties for children who needed a little joy in their lives. "It was a great experience to start something from scratch and see it come to fruition," recalls Yasaman.

"I gained confidence, learned to make decisions and realized that I aspired to become an entrepreneur. Ms. Darling's guidance was extremely supportive."

Yasaman manages the business aspects of OMG from her home in New York City, including sales, marketing and distribution. Her mother runs production and still makes every batch of granola in Maryland. "We're a great team because our roles are as different as our backgrounds and strengths, but together we share a passion for Oat My Goodness, which continues to drive us."



Top left: Yasaman's senior portrait from the 2008 edition of *Roll Call*; a sampling of Oat My Goodness flavors; Yasaman and her mother, Shohreh Vojdani, testing new Oat My Goodness recipes.