

Personal Processing

By Sheryl Rodgers '83

Tracy Barnes '98 may have thought that a trip to visit his big brother Troy at Butler was just that — a visit. But he quickly fell in love with the small close-knit campus feeling. “The small campus, small math and computer science department, and the personal touch that came from each teacher here made for the right atmosphere to help hold me accountable and ultimately help me be successful,” Barnes said.

Nearly 20 years later, he's a proud and active alumnus.

The Detroit, Mich., native initially attended Penn State, where he was a walk-on for the basketball team. But a knee injury, combined with his timely campus visit, ultimately brought the future entrepreneur to Butler in 1994, the year Troy graduated.

Barnes went on to earn his Butler degree in computer science. Even today, he values his ongoing relationship with one of his favorite computer science professors, Jon Sorenson, who made a great impact on his life in the classroom.

“The first class I took that truly connected the computer science theory with real world was the Database Systems class that Dr. Sorenson taught,” said Barnes. “Without that strong foundation and the ability of Dr. Sorenson to bring the theory to life, I would have never been as good a database technician as I have become.” He and Sorenson still talk regularly.

While a student at Butler, Barnes was introduced to Sorenson's brother, Ken, who was then in charge of what is now known as Information Resources. Ken Sorenson hired Barnes as a student worker, and he quickly became a valuable and versatile asset to the department. In 1997, Barnes was instrumental in Butler's implementation of the PeopleSoft campus software program, which the University still uses. Barnes paid his way through college by balancing a nearly full workweek with rigorous studying.

After Butler, while working for the IT consulting division of CIBER, Barnes had the opportunity to travel to England to work on projects with the University of Cambridge. There, he'd laugh when the people at Cambridge would tease him that their institution is older than his home country and he'd remind them that an American was the one keeping their IT system up and running.



Being able to wear many hats for the companies he had worked for since graduation convinced Barnes it was time to move his talents to a different stage. So, in 2004, Barnes launched his own technology consulting services firm, ENTAP, in downtown Indianapolis.

Over the last six years, ENTAP has grown into a successful, multimillion-dollar business that counts the state of Indiana as one of its largest clients, providing IT services such as strategic consulting and project management, business applications and systems analysis, integration, user training and ongoing support.

In addition to running a successful business, Barnes is a participant on the Butler University Computer Science Advisory Board, which allows him the opportunity to help shape the curriculum and provide opportunities for current and future com-

puter science students.

He recently teamed with Butler alumnus Virgil Madden to establish the Barnes/Madden “Move Ahead” Scholarship. Two scholarships are awarded annually — one to an African-American student majoring in computer science and the other to an African-American student majoring in either history or political science. Barnes, a current member of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences' Board of Visitors, said he hopes other Butler African-American alumni will become involved with the University in some capacity.

When he visits Butler now, Barnes is impressed with all of the campus' physical changes, including the Fairbanks Building, the Health and Recreation Complex and, most recently, the new Pharmacy and Health Sciences Building addition. He occasionally gets to a Butler basketball game to root for the Bulldogs when his busy work and travel schedule allows. But Barnes says more than athletics or amenities, the foundation of Butler's success is the focus on the student. The University, he said, should never lose sight of the ultimate prize — graduating well-prepared students who become engaged and contributing alumni.