

ALUMNI  
**SPOTLIGHT**

officer. For his service, Pat was recognized by President Barack Obama and President George W. Bush. He now works for non-profit strategic consulting firm the Logistics Management Institute as vice president for health policy and analysis.

**STUART NAROFSKY (B.ARCH. '78)** is principal of Narofsky Architecture in Long Island City, N.Y. He has also taught as an adjunct professor at NYIT.

**WILLIAM ROONEY (B.S. '78)** is a software architect working in IBM's z/OS development organization. Rooney is also a member of the IBM Academy of Technology and was named an IBM Master Inventor. His favorite NYIT memory involves serving in the student chapter for the Association for Computing Machinery. "The chapter organized a bus trip to the IBM Poughkeepsie site where we viewed their manufacturing line and had an opportunity to speak to some of the people working there," he recalls. "It had never occurred to me that a couple of years later, I would be working for IBM at that very site."



Photo courtesy of Bill Zerella

**BILL ZERELLA (B.S. '78)** (pictured) is chief financial officer for Fitbit, a health and fitness tech company. "NYIT is where it all started," he says. "My degree in accounting gave me a solid foundation to launch my business career and has served me well over the years." He and his wife, Nancy, have two sons and enjoy life in California, taking the occasional weekend excursion to Napa Valley (see p. 6).



## Mikah Sellers

(M.B.A. '05, M.A. '07)

**I AM RELIGIOUS ABOUT KEEPING UP WITH TRENDS IN THE INDUSTRY,"** says **Mikah Sellers**. As chief digital officer at Grafik, one of Washington, D.C.'s premier marketing and advertising firms, he needs to be. Since 2013, Sellers has been responsible for creating innovative digital marketing for Grafik's wide range of clients, including Honda and the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. Thinking creatively and problem-solving for wildly different needs means he needs to be on top of his game at all times. Sellers participates in professional development workshops and stays current on industry trends. "I probably dedicate at least six to eight hours to industry reading on a weekly basis," he says.

His dedication to learning is nothing new. He has four graduate degrees and plans to start on a fifth. Two of those degrees, an M.A. in Communication Arts and an M.B.A., were earned at NYIT. There, Sellers developed left and right brain thinking, thanks in part to the differences between the two programs. "I came out a much more well-rounded thinker," he says. "I gained a lot of the analytical skills I needed through the M.B.A. program. As I transitioned in the M.A. program, I rounded skills like my creative writing and my ability to look at the problems through a human-centered lens."

Sellers's years in the military also fostered his commitment to discipline, integrity, and training. "One of my old chiefs in the Navy used to say, 'If you don't sharpen the sword daily, it gets dull and it will no longer be valuable.'" In his industry—one that is evolving at an exponential rate—a strong foundation and the right degrees are just as essential as staying flexible and learning new things. "Being a comprehensive marketer and thinking like a product developer is more important than ever," he says. "We've seen an explosion of marketing technology in the past five years ... With the emergence of social networks, what used to be a one-way conversation has become a two-way conversation."

In addition to finding new ways to engage consumers at Grafik, Sellers also serves as an adjunct professor at Georgetown University, mentoring the next generation of digital marketers. "If I do a great job as an educator, I can have a huge impact on that student, and downstream, that student can have a huge impact on others." Sellers further maximizes his sphere of influence by assisting new businesses, and startups. To choose his projects, he follows a simple formula. "Fundamentally I am a geek. I love technology and I love solving complicated problems. For me it comes down to this: Am I solving a problem that has scale? I want to make a positive impact for the largest possible number of people." ■

Courtesy of Mikah Sellers