Alumni

GORDON CONWELL

Alumni Spotlight: Michelle Cherubin Joseph (MAUML '17)

Current title: Associate Director of Research Administration at Harvard Chan School, Harvard University

Family: Husband: Roland, Children: Michael & Romih

Favorite professors and classes: Each professor contributed to a very enriching experience at Gordon-Conwell. From the Systematic Theology courses with Dr. Bill Spencer to Church History with Dr. Gordon Isaac, Workplace Theology with Dr. Kenneth Barnes and Leadership, Management and Strategy with Dr. Virginia Ward.

A favorite memory: Dr. Spencer gave a few of his students a ride home one night after a class at CUME and we were chatting about how I was unsure whether my seminary degree would benefit me in my administrative roles. I remember him telling me that everything in my life would benefit from my time in seminary and that has stayed with me.

Please tell us more about your role as Associate Director of Research Administration at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

My team and I work with the faculty, students, and staff throughout the lifecycle of sponsored grants and contracts. We are interpreters and negotiators of terms and conditions. We are problem solvers, and we continuously serve as the liaisons between the sponsors and the researchers.

How did God weave together your Gordon-Conwell education with other life events to bring you to where you are now?

My time at Gordon-Conwell provided such clarity on how my faith is the foundation of my life and that as long as I stay true to myself and the kind of person that my faith calls upon me to be, I don't need to worry about whether I am on the right path, including the trajectory of my career. I decided to pursue higher education when I was in college, mostly because of the people I worked with in the Student Activities office and the other administrators who worked behind the scenes. I came to Research Administration and Sponsored Programs through a temp agency. I found the work interesting. I loved the team and agreed when I was offered a permanent position.

What are some things you love about your position there at Harvard?

As an Associate Director, I serve as a School and University signatory with primary responsibilities for drafting, interpreting, reviewing, and negotiating research documents, especially federal contracts, grant awards, and agreements specifically to share data. Throughout the lifecycle of a research project, my team and I advise, guide, and

problem-solve, while working closely with faculty and administrators in finalizing and signing funding requests and award documents, as well as award management/post-award items.

What are the challenges of research administration in higher education in general, and in your context specifically?

Higher education and the process of obtaining funding for research tends to shift based on the state of the world. Economic, political and public health shifts have a great impact on the type of funding available to our researchers and our office must be responsive to those shifts. Our team comes together to navigate the different changes and continue to support each other and our researchers.

What has been Gordon-Conwell's biggest impact/influence in your current role, or the way you engage in your role?

I gained a stronger sense of self and a solid perspective on what my values and priorities were during my time in seminary. In the end, it's how we treat each other that matters the most. And Jesus was the greatest example of how to be a human being. My Gordon-Conwell experience has permeated how I approach my role and how I show up in all areas of my life.