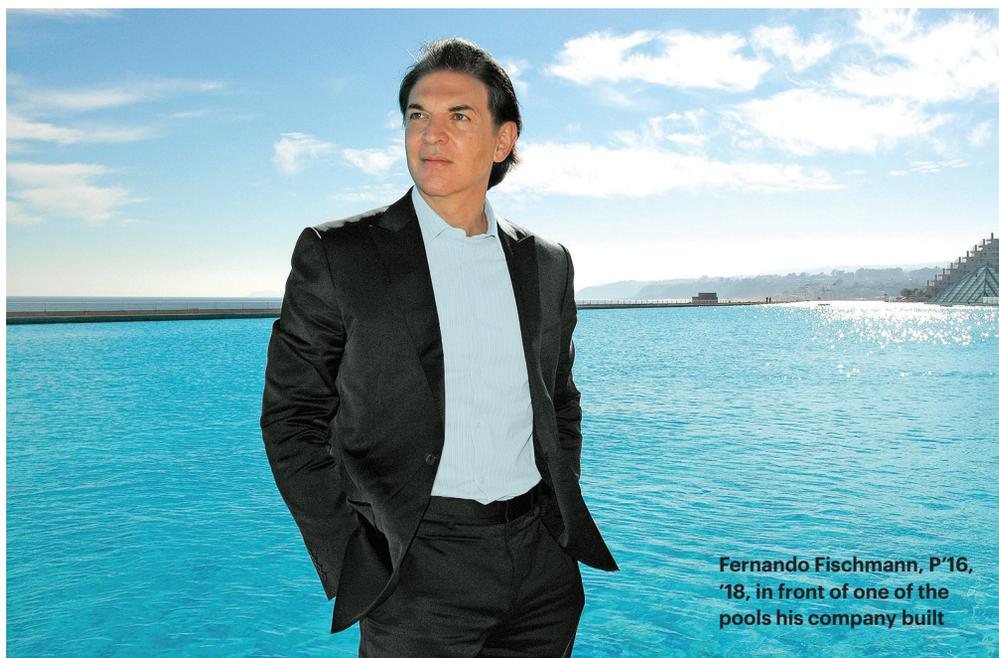


Giving Back



Fernando Fischmann, P'16, '18, in front of one of the pools his company built

Fernando Fischmann's memories as a young boy in Santiago, Chile, are imprinted with his love of science. "I was always looking at nature," he recalls. "I had a small microscope, and I did experiments with chemicals with the kits that you can buy at the toy store. In biology class, we studied DNA. I was so impressed with this—it was a kind of illumination in my mind—something so small that explained so much."

Fischmann studied biochemistry at the University of Chile and took a job at a marine biology institute upon graduating. But seeing limited opportunities for advancement, he made a difficult decision to switch gears and pursue a career as a real estate developer. Though he didn't know it then, his passion for science would play a prominent role in his future success. Fischmann notes

how "unexpected things happen in life."

After purchasing land on the central coast of Chile where the sea is cold and has dangerous undertows, Fischmann wondered if he could build a large tropical lagoon with white sand beaches and clear, warm water that would be safe for swimming. He hired a company to develop the technology, but after the lagoon was filled with water, it turned green. "I wasn't aware of how difficult this was going to be," he says. "The technology didn't exist." When he searched the world for a solution and was told that it was impossible, he decided to use his scientific training to create the technology himself.

The project became part of San Alfonso del Mar, a private resort developed by Fischmann in Algarrobo, Chile, featuring a 20-acre swimming pool that

uses Pacific seawater. Reportedly the largest pool in the world, its crystal clear water is maintained with Fischmann's technology, which employs computerized sensors, low levels of chemicals, and ultrasound technology. Sunlight keeps the lagoon approximately 9 degrees warmer than the ocean.

Fischmann's company, Crystal Lagoons, currently is involved in more than 300 projects in 60 countries around the world and was valued in 2009 at \$1.8 billion. While he is proud of his business success, he says, "The opportunity to combine entrepreneurship and science has been a very joyful connection for me."

With his daughter, Stephanie '16, and son, Benjamin '18, enrolled at Babson, Fischmann saw a unique chance to share his love of science with a new generation of business students. In

2015, he made a gift to the Babson Math and Science Division to purchase new equipment and high-tech instruments. "Being a businessman and a scientist, and also with my children at Babson, this was a fantastic opportunity for giving back toward something that has a special meaning to me," he says.

Jodi Schaefer, manager of the Babson science labs, purchased the new equipment, which includes a microbalance for precise measurements, a 3-D printer, a telescope, a large plant-growth chamber, an infrared camera, and the installation of a research bench for faculty and independent-study students. "The gift has transformed our lab," Schaefer says. "We have more space to work, we can conduct new types of on-site research, and these tools have allowed us to expand partnerships with other colleges. It has been amazing."

Fischmann hopes his gift will allow Babson's distinctive science curriculum, with its emphasis on emerging technology and real-world applications, to create wider interest in science among the business-minded. "There are many scientists who have great ideas that never happen because they do not have entrepreneurship skills, and of course there are many entrepreneurs who will never develop these ideas because they don't know that they exist," says Fischmann. "With the challenges we have today, science is our hope for the future." —*Jeff Stupakevich, manager, development communications*