

Blue MBA participant Peggy Høegh Grays looks to An Ocean of Opportunities

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Peggy Høegh Grays

Peggy Høegh Grays knew at the age of just 12 that she wanted to spend her life in the maritime industry. Her step-father, Henrik Kjaersulf, was a chief steward with the Danish shipowner Rederiet Dannebrog/Nordana Line and had the opportunity to bring Peggy's mother, Pia, and Peggy along on a three-month employment. During the round-trip Peggy acquired skills such as planning, manning a shop, checking supplies, invoicing, ordering provisions, cooking – and even had a chance to steer the vessel in the Atlantic Ocean.

The young Peggy fell in love with the maritime industry on that voyage, and any other career option looked much less challenging and colourful.

Today, with more than 20 years' shipping experience, Mrs Grays is the founder and chief executive of GraysOwn LLC, a maritime education and consulting firm based in Houston, Texas, providing training from a practical standpoint.

To take her professional achievements to still higher levels, she has now embarked on the course for the MBA in Shipping & Logistics (the Blue MBA) at Copenhagen Business School. The part-time programme aligns participants' study with their needs to continue to play an active role in the running of their organisations.

Mrs Grays was born in Denmark and this was where she started her full-time shipping career, as a trainee with KIL Management (also known as Knud I Larsen). She later worked in Malaysia, Singapore and Germany before making Houston her home.

Sharing knowledge about the maritime industry and helping people grow professionally is her passion. Holding positions in operations for various shipowners in drycargo, breakbulk, liner service and tankers, and being a port manager for one of the largest port agents in the US has presented her with tremendous opportunity to mentor team members in various countries. Mrs Grays takes pleasure in seeing mentees thrive as a demonstration of their willingness to receive guidance and apply the accumulated knowledge and methods in their jobs. She is convinced that when employees are well equipped through education and shared knowledge, they become more confident and content in their jobs and their retention rate rises. Few mentors can devote all their time to

training. By outsourcing education of entry-level employees, mid-management is spared valuable time to accomplish everyday tasks, and new employees can work more independently one to two months earlier than had they been trained in-house. She compares seminars run by GraysOwn to a “boot camp preparing employees for a successful career in shipping.”

Mrs Grays is the author of a forthcoming book, entitled *The Maritime Industry – an Ocean of Opportunities*, written to inspire the best people to join the maritime industry, and help entry-level employees gain thorough knowledge of the basics, as well as offer tips and tricks on optimising vessel operation.

Since 2016 Mrs Grays has been a ship operator with Stolt Tankers USA in Houston. Previously, from 2012 to 2013, she was the operations manager at Hansa Heavy Lift, a company specialising in the transport of heavy-lift and project cargoes. She fulfilled this role both in Germany and in the United States.

During her career, she has at various times been responsible for the operational management of up to 14 vessels, as well as negotiation of stevedoring rates, agency agreements and the close monitoring of cargo operations to optimise voyages.

Mrs Grays has worked in the project cargo field since 2007, when she joined Scan-Trans as vessel operator at its head office in Denmark. In 2008 she moved to the Scan-Trans office in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; and in 2010 transferred to Houston as operations department lead, where she gained expertise in customer relations with some of the top companies in shipping and energy. Scan-Trans is now a part of the Intermarine Group. In 2010 Mrs Grays worked in Singapore as an operations manager with Beluga Chartering, a German-based heavy-lift company.

Tags: [Blu MBA](#), [CBS \(Copenhagen Business School\)](#), [Rederiet Dannebrog/Nordana Line](#)

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