

Student Stories Project: Kaylyn Easton

Audio version available at: <http://www.alumni.indiana.edu/profiles/students/easton.shtml>

[IU fight song]

Welcome to the Indiana University Student Stories Project, a production of the IU Alumni Association. I'm your host, Alana Salata. In this series, you'll get an insight into what it takes to be a student leader here at IU, from the perks –

“... driving around the Mexican National Youth Soccer Team in white minivans ... ”

– to the hard work –

“I was challenged during LeaderShape to come out of my shell a little bit more.”

– to the memories that will last a lifetime.

“This year we won Big Tens ... In college sports, winning a conference is, like, everything.”

Join me on this journey through the lives of IU student leaders.

[IU fight song]

SALATA: Today we're speaking with Kaylyn Easton of Indiana University Student Television.

EASTON: Hi, my name is Kaylyn Easton, and I will be a junior here at IU. I am studying broadcast journalism and religious studies. I came from Greenwood, Indiana, and I went to Center Grove High School – it's the south side of Indianapolis. Right now at IUSTV I am the executive director of the entire station. And my interests include fitness, meeting new people, traveling, reading, and music.

Why did you choose to attend IU?

I came to IU because it was far enough away from home to be gone, but close enough that I could still go home if I needed to. I also had several scholarships that came to IU only and nowhere else, so it was kind of my only option. But I really liked the campus and the atmosphere and all of the majors – and especially the journalism school because that's what I wanted to study – so it was the best fit.

Tell me about a meaningful or enjoyable experience you've had at IU.

I think my favorite experience so far has been meeting my new friends. Especially living in the dorms freshman year. I met a huge group of girls that I'm still really close with now – and they all live in the sororities, of course, and I'm one of those independents, but it's really fun to meet up at parties and hang out and see what's going on in each others' lives. So I guess living in the dorms, even though it's such a cliché – nobody likes the dorms as a freshman, but once you leave it's kind of sad because you're not with all your best friends living close together.

What advice would you give to incoming freshmen or other students just starting out at IU?

I would tell incoming freshmen to get outside your comfort zone – because you think you know what you like and you think you know what you want to do, which most of the time you're probably pretty straight on, but there are some experiences or groups or clubs or times where you just have to let go of everything you're familiar with and experience something new because that's how you learn and how you continue to grow who you are. And I would say try and meet as many people as possible, you know, and don't be the freshman that sits in your dorm room all by yourself and doesn't socialize and get out there, and I would say get involved. Get involved as soon as you can because it will just pay off later on.

What is IUSTV?

IU Student Television is an independent student television station that is run and created by students here at IU. It basically is a place for students to gain real-world experience in the television industry; but at the same time we produce programming for IU and the Bloomington community. And in a sense we're a student organization but also a business, so it's a little bit of everything – but it's a television station where students are able to learn and grow, and then we also have cable and campus cable programming.

Why did you decide to become a member of IUSTV?

I became a member of IUSTV because I had done my high school's television station, which was basically just reading the announcements every morning, and I did a little news show and I wanted to see if IUSTV was anything similar because I really enjoyed doing that in high school. When I first came to IU I was planning to study law and I actually didn't declare my broadcast journalism major until second semester freshman year after I had been involved with IUSTV for a whole semester. So I became a member just because it looked like fun, but now I'm attached.

Tell me about an IUSTV event or program that you were involved in that you are particularly proud of.

I think... not necessarily, it's not necessarily an event or program, but it was a really big purchase that came from the telecom department when we got a lot of new equipment last fall. It's all professional-grade equipment and we got it at a really good price, but that's not why I'm proud of it – I'm proud of it because it really helped our control room become more professional-level. Even though it's ten years old or so, it's still more of an experience than using computer-animated software. You know, now we have a switcher and analogs and this and that, so that was something that I'm really proud of: that we were able to get more kids to have that hands-on technical stuff. And I'm also really proud of all the shows that IUSTV has. I know that's not a specific event or program in general that's for the campus or for the students... but everybody works really, really hard and is very team-oriented, and the shows that come out of IUSTV are much better quality than they have been in the past years, and they're more creative and they're fun and they're entertaining, and I'm really proud that I get to work with people who are that inspiring and know what they want to do and can make it happen.

How have your leadership skills developed over the course of your participation with IUSTV?

My leadership has developed *so much* in the last year. As a sophomore when I got the leadership position I was just so scared and clueless and I basically was thrown into this because the previous leader had left and moved to Japan and there was nobody here to mentor me or help me. And I learned that communication is probably one of the main focal points of any type of leadership position – communication, working together, and finding common goals between a group of people. And those are the leadership skills I've really developed as well as just learning more about IU Student Television and our role on campus as an independent television station and within the community.

What other organizations are you a part of here at IU?

I am a part of two other organizations. One is the Student Organizational Ethics Board, and it is the board that basically reviews any type of misappropriations or any type of what I like to call "bad behavior" by sororities, fraternities, and any other organization on campus. So we have to follow the IU Student Code of Ethics, and when a fraternity gets in trouble for serving alcohol to underage minors they come to us and we tell them what their sanction/punishment is going to be for the rest of the semester. So it's kind of exciting because you get to hear a lot of police reports and a lot of back stories that otherwise you wouldn't hear in the newspaper. Of course, you know, we're all under secrecy – you know, nothing leaves the boardroom – but it's really a neat organization.

And I'm also a part of the journalism ambassadors team. Being an ambassador, basically, we work for the School of Journalism. It's a volunteer position but we get to meet lots of famous people. I've met Michele Norris from NPR. I've met Jane Pauley, who used to be the *Today Show* host, and I also help with any type of speakers that come into the campus

for the journalism school. We also work with the professors and the dean to find out programs and classes and other such things that are working or not working for the journalism school. So it's kind of a leadership position just within that one school that helps make it better.

What are your future goals, and how do you think IU has helped prepare you to meet those goals?

My future goals involve finding a professional job in television – something that actually pays me at some point. I would love to move to a really big city – maybe New York, maybe L.A., Chicago – something that's just away from Indiana, that's outside my comfort zone. And I'm hoping that my role at IUSTV and my classes at IU and the journalism school will give me the forefront I need to put together a résumé to find those leadership skills and that experience to get a job in the television industry. Maybe work for network news or cable news, or any type of television show – I'd clean for a television show if they needed me to – but I think IU will give me the experience I need to be one step above the others.

What will you miss the most when you graduate?

When I graduate, I think I'm going to miss – well, I'll miss IUSTV. It will be bittersweet. I'll miss that organization and the closeness and the familiarity of it all. Of course, it will be nice to not have the workload every day. But at the same time I think I'll also miss the people and the total atmosphere of Indiana University because it's inviting and it's home and it's fun and it's sad when you leave because you're done. I think I'll miss IU in general, not necessarily one particular thing.

We've been talking with Kaylyn Easton of Indiana University Student Television.

[IU fight song]

This series was produced by the Indiana University Alumni Association with special thanks to the IU Marching Hundred and director Dave Woodley. I'm Alana Salata.

[IU fight song]