

Student Stories Project: John Greco

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

[IU fight song]

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

“When we did a Katrina event, people – a group of people that pulled together an organization that could benefit something so great – it was amazing to see.”

– to the hard work –

“... Pushing me a lot more, it's – my initiative's gone way up, especially with so much on my plate right now.”

– to the memories that will last a lifetime.

“I was in a photo op with coach Hep...”

“... ten-year reunion was just, it was a lot of fun. It was great to see 30-plus guys come back for the show.”

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

[IU fight song]

SALATA: Today we're speaking with John Greco of the Student Alumni Association.

GRECO: My name is John Greco. I am currently a sophomore here at IU. I'm from Fort Wayne, Indiana. My major right now is biochemistry, but I'm going to switch to neuroscience as soon as it becomes an official major – probably next fall. I'm also in the Liberal Arts Management Program getting a certificate in management. And right now with the Student Alumni Association, I am the director of promotions and special events. I work with, mainly, Homecoming, especially this semester. I'm also the director of hunger and homelessness for the Volunteer Students Bureau, working with Bloomington community agencies to get IU students to work over with places like Community Kitchen and Shalom Community Center.

Why did you choose to attend IU?

I'm going to be honest – when I first applied to colleges, IU was pretty much at the bottom of my list.

Really?

I had preconceived notions about IU. I applied to a lot of Big Ten schools and a few top-tier schools – got in everywhere, but what happened was I came down here and it was for a scholarship, and they just treated me – everyone at IU treated me so well. I had never been treated that way in my life – in high school, any of the schools I applied – and just the reception I got when I visited IU and came down to do interviews for this scholarship, it was just – it was unbelievable. And I got the scholarship, and with the scholarship came so many opportunities with IU STARS to do research. Starting as a freshman and getting into a research lab – that was really important to me, and just, like I said, the reception that I got, and just – I don't think that I would have had many of the opportunities that I have being at IU that I would have had going to another school.

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

A big experience, really memorable, was last year I was in a photo op with coach Hep. Me and a bunch of my friends, we paint for the – we paint our chests for the football games. We spell out “Hep's Crew.” So we did a photo op with coach Hep for the yearbook. It was at the stadium, and he threw touchdown passes to us and took us through the football facilities. He's a good guy, that's for sure.

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

My biggest piece of advice would be to get out and get involved and just make yourself a part of the university. College would not be as enjoyable by far if I didn't go out and make connections and meet people and just become, I guess, fully immersed in the college atmosphere.

How did you find out about SAA, and why did you decide to become a member?

Actually, last year the president of SAA – I remembered him from high school. I didn't really know him all that well, but I remembered him because Kirk was just the kind of guy who you remember. I went to the first event– I went to a Big Red Warm-up for the first football game – and I went up to him and talked to him and I just kind of got involved right from the start last year. I got Member of the Month in September and just got kind of sucked into the whole SAA thing. SAA really does do everything. All the big events like Jill Behrman [Run for the Endzone] and Hoosiers Outrun Cancer; and then we did a Katrina event last year – there were just so many things that SAA did and I was just kind of like, “Wow, this is definitely an organization I want to get involved in.” There's so much to do, and the people are just so awesome.

How have your leadership skills developed over the course of your participation in SAA?

Well, I think one thing for sure is that it's really – it's pushing me a lot more. My initiative's gone way up, especially with so much on my plate right now. I've really had to kick it into high gear like I haven't before. I guess I've always been a hard worker, but it's really, really kicking up this semester. I guess another thing is that just being able to relate to people, just the diversity of people that I meet in SAA, and meeting new members and talking to them, I guess my people skills have gotten better too while I've been in SAA.

What have you gained though your interactions with IU alumni?

When I did Networking Nights – meeting with the alumni there, just really neat people, and hearing their stories and talking with them and making connections.

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

Future goals – wow. Those have been shaken up a lot in the past week or two, really. It's been kind of scary for me. But right now, I'm thinking about going into medical school. I guess IU has prepared me academically for that, but like I say, really SAA – the initiative has really kicked in. Being responsible for so many things, it really has forced me to work a lot harder, realize that it's not just me that I'm working for, it's that I'm working for this university and this community. I think going into medical school and realizing, being a doctor, that you do have a lot of responsibility not just for yourself but for other people. And just with IU, like I said, being so involved. And I'm starting to realize just how important a lot of things are, not just for me, but for others.

What will you miss the most when you graduate?

I don't know. I don't want to think about that right now, I really don't. Just the ability to go to all the sporting events and being involved with an organization like SAA, and it's kind of sad to think about, in a few short years, that it's all going to change. But that'll be exciting, too. We'll see.

We've been talking with John Greco of the IU Bloomington Student Alumni Association.

[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.

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