

Student Stories Project: Chris Hayes

Audio version available at: <http://www.alumni.indiana.edu/profiles/students/hayes.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 –

“The Alumni Association here at South Bend had selected me to go to IU Bloomington’s annual LeaderShape training program for a week.”

– to the hard work –

“Time management: it’s hard because I love the group so much and I just – I want to volunteer for everything and I want to do everything.”

– to the memories that will last a lifetime.

“I’ve met so many people that have touched my life in so many ways.”

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

[IU fight song]

SALATA: Today we’re at IU Kokomo speaking with Chris Hayes of the Multicultural Student Organization.

HAYES: My name is Christopher J. Hayes. I’m a junior here at Indiana University in Kokomo. I’m a business major with a focus in marketing distribution. My hometown is Fort Wayne, Indiana; I’m currently living in Marion, Indiana. Some of my interests: work and go to school. Maybe in my free time I might play ultimate frisbee with my friends, so I’ve got this scuff on my knee.

Why did you choose to attend IU Kokomo?

I chose to attend IU Kokomo because out of the eight campuses that IU has, this actually has the lowest tuition. Taking into consideration, knowing that I plan to pursue advanced degrees in the future, I thought that would be an appropriate choice.

Tell me about a meaningful or enjoyable experience you have had at IU Kokomo.

One of the meaningful experiences I had is actually hosting some of the events that we hold here. I hosted the Poetry Jam, and I hosted the African-American Read-in – it’s a national read-in that

they have at many different campuses, and we decided to do one here at Indiana University in Kokomo. So I hosted that, and it was like a bonding experience between many different individuals, because I think everybody was able to appreciate some of the African-American literature.

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

I think the first thing to do is have an open mind. Just take your general courses first. A lot of younger students are at a kind of precarious stage in their life where they don't know exactly what maybe they want to major in, so take some general courses. And get involved with the organizations; it's going to enhance your personal growth and well-being.

Tell me a little about the Multicultural Student Organization at IU Kokomo.

The Multicultural Student Organization here is a blend between many different cultural organizations that were here prior. I think there used to be an African-American organization, but they decided to blend it all into a multicultural organization for diversity reasons because diversity is going to help everybody in the long run.

How did you find out about the Multicultural Student Organization, and why did you decide to become a member?

I actually found out about it from another student, and I got some more information through Catherine Barnes here, who does the minority recruitment at IUK. I decided to become a member because I just wanted to experience some more personal growth, kind of get beyond what I already know about life, just kind of grow some more.

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

The Poetry Jam was something I'm very proud of. Didn't too many people show up, but the people that showed up, I mean, it was great. Honestly, there was people there that were probably 60, 70 years older than I am. Okay, I'm exaggerating: maybe about 40 or 50. But there were some very mature people there. And they were doing their poetry, and it was great poetry. I mean, and there were different generations there, different people from different walks of life, but what we all had in common was that we wanted to share our experiences through poetry, and it was a great moment.

How have your leadership skills developed over the course of your participation in the Multicultural Student Organization?

I can say they increased by making me more prone to step out and do things without other people asking me to do it. I guess that's what being a leader is about, is just taking charge. There's a lot of people in a multi-student organization.

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

In the beginning of fall I'll be joining the SIFE, which is the Students in Free Enterprise, which is mainly a business-oriented organization. They host events and they also travel to different places where they compete and they present different business plans and things like that. I think that will enhance my business skills. I'm also involved, like I said, in the Urban Pre-dental Club down at IUPUI, which is a pre-dental group that helps foster growth for students to become dentists. So it's a great organization.

How do you think IU Kokomo has helped prepare you to meet your goals?

IU Kokomo provided me with a lot of foundation as far as setting my goals, stationing myself, and then applying what I need to to achieve those goals. Also, the professors here are very encouraging; they're here to help and they're here to get you where you need to be at or where you want to go in life. So they reinforce that.

What will you miss the most when you graduate?

Just the lack of responsibilities that I have right now. I just – I work, I don't pay any bills, and it's great to have money, so I know as soon as I get out of college I'm going to be financially burdened, so that's not going to be great.

We've been talking with Chris Hayes of IU Kokomo's Multicultural Student Organization.

[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]