

Student Stories Project: Barbara Janiak

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

[IUPUI 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 –

“... opportunities to take additional training and do things that I probably wouldn't get to do if I were not part of JagCorps ...”

– to the hard work –

“... It's kind of a complicated thing to put that on ... making community decisions, just making sure to cooperate.”

– to the memories that will last a lifetime.

“When I was nominated as a Top Ten female of 2006 for IUPUI ...”

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

[IUPUI fight song]

SALATA: Today we're at IUPUI speaking with Barbara Janiak of JagCorps.

JANIAK: Hi, my name's Barbara Janiak. I am a senior at IUPUI; my major is geology with a specialty in environmental sciences. My hometown is Fort Dix, New Jersey, and I grew up mostly in Cincinnati, Ohio, before moving to Indianapolis. I am currently the secretary-treasurer with JagCorps. My outside interests include motorcycling and music.

Why did you choose to attend IUPUI?

Because it was close. It's close to where I work full-time, and I live downtown, and this is about 10 minutes away for me. So it's location.

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

There's been a lot of them. I don't know... I really like it when I'm in a class and I can make a connection to a course that I've had before and it's kind of like a light-bulb moment. That may not seem that meaningful to some people, but it is to me because I can really see the academic connection and it makes my learning experience a lot richer. And

also, just learning about anything that I didn't know before that I really find interesting is a really enriching experience. I think knowledge is power.

What advice would you give to non-traditional students just starting out at IUPUI?

Well, don't be shy. Get involved. You know, make the most of your campus experience, and don't let age be a factor that keeps you out of joining clubs or organizations or getting involved – because, I think, this is a commuter campus with 38,000 students, so the students have a varied background. I mean, there are many traditional students who are younger, just out of high school and getting started on their first degree, and there are also people who work or people who are mothers and just have lives outside of just attending school.

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

I actually read about it in the JagNews – I get these little updates via e-mail – and I read about it. It was a work-study position and I qualify for work-study, so I thought, you know, this might be a good opportunity for me to make a really nominal income – because it's a paying position as well – but at the same time do something that's contributing to campus life.

Tell me about a JagCorps event or program that you were involved in that you're particularly proud of.

Well, we do this thing called “Weeks of Welcome,” and the primary purpose is to – it's like an orientation sort of program for incoming students, including transfer students or really just anybody that wants to participate. It's a big day on campus where we set up huge tents in the courtyard, and all the student organizations get out there and work together to promote their organizations, and it's just a real fun day. You get to meet a lot of people and it's a good chance for people to kind of network.

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

My leadership skills have developed and improved because I've had opportunities to take additional training and do things that I probably wouldn't get to do if I were not part of JagCorps – for example, LeaderShape. I was nominated for that by our supervisor, Beth Harsany, in addition to the other folks who were there at LeaderShape from IUPUI. Also, I took an alternative spring break training leadership class, which, again, I wouldn't have known about without JagCorps. And just a lot of different opportunities – plus, really getting to meet the other, like, some of the deans on campus and things, is really cool.

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

My future goal in my fantasy life is to become a park ranger out West – somewhere like Colorado, Montana, South Dakota – and just live a very simple life. I also want – wanted – to sell everything and take a motorcycle trip around the world, but I don't know if I'll ever actually do that – and, like, document it and write a book about it.

What will you miss the most when you graduate?

I'll miss studying because I do so much of it and I do it really well. I seriously will. I'll probably study something on my own or make up projects for myself.

We've been talking with Barbara Janiak of IUPUI's JagCorps.

(IUPUI fight song)

This series was produced by the Indiana University Alumni Association. I'm Alana Salata.