

Student Stories Project: Kristen King

Audio version available at: <http://www.alumni.indiana.edu/profiles/students/king.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 Kristen King of the Student Alumni Association.

KING: My name is Kristen King, and I am a junior, and my major is human development and family studies with minors in criminal justice, psych, and sociology; and my goal is to go to law school and do family law. My hometown is Denver, Colorado. I am the president of the Student Alumni Association. And I like to golf, I like to work out, I like to be with my family... I'm usually really, really busy, so for me to have free time, I just do whatever – let my brain kind of relax a little bit.

Why did you choose to attend IU?

Originally I played soccer, since I was young, young, young. I went through the whole process – I started talking to coaches and stuff – and it started getting to April and it just

was not something that I was willing to put 100 percent in. I've been involved in sports since I was little. I'd never been involved in anything else, I'd never been in any other organization – but I came to Bloomington and I loved it. It was – it's so pretty. And the people were so nice and so down-to-earth. The campus is a lot like Boulder, except no mountains. I was walking through – actually, sophomore year, last year – I was walking through and I couldn't imagine being anywhere else. So I love it here!

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

You know, most of my experiences come from SAA. I really – this has been like my second home. Coming from so far away, I didn't know a single person here. Ken Beckley was my first friend – not a bad first friend to have. But you know, I really enjoy just meeting all sorts of people, and I really like to learn. I'm one of those people who likes to sit in class, and I really like learning. Spirit of Sport is probably one of my most favorite weekends.

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

Get involved. Also, too, to not be afraid to step out of your comfort zone – because there's so many people that come from Indy and wherever else in Indiana, and you come down with friends, and so many people just hook on to those people, and I think obviously with a campus of 40,000 people there are a ton of opportunities and connections and networking to be made with other students. So be risky – and this is a time when you can do that.

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

I met Adam Basey over summer – I met Adam, and he was like, “You should become involved,” and I was like, whatever, ten dollars, T-shirt, I'll do that, and so originally I just did it because it was the T-shirt, and I did the whole walking around the library. Then I came to a call-out meeting, and I really enjoyed it. People approached me and I felt very welcomed, like they really wanted to get to know me, and I felt very comfortable there, and I actually still am really good friends with the first people that got me hooked in SAA. And like I said, it's just a second home, and I felt included from the very beginning.

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

I was director of philanthropy last year, and we did a Katrina event, and that happened right when we got back to school. It was really neat to see a group of people organize something so fast. And we didn't raise – I think we raised maybe \$2,500, it wasn't a lot – but for me, to get people involved – and for people, a group of people, to pull together an organization that could benefit something so great – it was amazing to see. And I also really like Relay for Life. Both of these are through our IR [Internal Relations] program.

Walking for cancer and raising for cancer, I think, is a great cause, and I really enjoyed walking and just seeing the people that came out because that was an opportunity for the students to get involved with the community and create that bond, and alumni came to that, and it was just kind of everyone together at an event, and I really enjoyed that.

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

I've always been a very outgoing person, but I've had a hard time – I still have a hard time – because I want everyone to be as organized as I am and to have the priorities that I have. And one of the things I've learned being in SAA is that people have all sorts of priorities, and you need to really learn to work with different people's styles; and people aren't going to adapt with you, and you really have to be flexible; but you have to be trusting in all of the people that you work with, because if you don't have trust, nothing will get done. So I think having a bigger role, being a president as a junior, I think I've really learned a lot about myself as well. So I just think the trust and communication, and being honest and open – that has really helped increase my leadership skills.

What have you gained through your interactions with IU alumni?

Well, with Ken, who is an alumnus, you know, I really gained a friend. And I'm on the selection committee for the new CEO of the IUAA, and it's very bittersweet for me because it's such a great experience – I mean, I've never had anything like this. To be on a board with 13 other committee members – and they're trustees, and they're presidents of other campuses – it's amazing. But also, my friend is leaving. So I would say a friendship – but also, with other alumni, you know, you learn networking. I think one of the things that I've learned the most is that you really can have an impact on students. Like Ken, for example, or even John Hobson: they both speak and students know who they are, and I think that's something that students should really strive for. Those are people who I look up to and hope to become when I am older.

Are you a part of any other organizations?

Yes: Volunteer Students Bureau, and I'm on the Board of Aeons. And then I'm on a few other committees that my position selects me for.

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

Start small: I would like to – one of my goals is to continue and be president next year. The only way I will do that is if I feel like I've completed the year out really well. And I think if someone has stepped up in SAA and they really do a great job, then I want them to do it because I've had the opportunity. If I really feel like I've really done a great job this year, then I will apply for it again, because I have such a fun time doing it. And then go to law school – that is my next goal, and IU has helped me prepare for that because they give me opportunities, and I think if students take those opportunities and run with

them, you'll become an outstanding person. And college gives you those opportunities, and honestly, I don't understand why people don't get involved. I mean, that's one of my questions that I cannot get answered and I can't figure it out.

What will you miss the most when you graduate?

You know, I'll really miss SAA. I was thinking about that. You know, soccer was one of those things, and I left it and I found this, and I'm one of those people – I'll put 100 percent into everything that I do. I was already thinking about that. I can't imagine not waking up and being like, I have COW [SAA Committee of the Whole] tonight, you know, I'm excited to go to a COW meeting. I'm really, really going to miss SAA. I'm going to miss walking through the trees, like on the paths, and I'm going to miss being able to grab Coldstone [ice cream] really late at night. I'm going to miss hanging out and watching TV with my roommates. Being here late nights and walking out and having it be so dark and I run to my car – you know, just little things, that they'll never – they'll never happen again.

We've been talking with Kristen King 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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