

Student Stories Project: Sean Cork

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

“... 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 Sean Cork of the IU Student Alumni Association.

My name is Sean Cork. I am a senior majoring in finance and international business. I'm from Indianapolis, Indiana. My position with SAA is vice president of leadership development, and I attended LeaderShape two years ago in 2005. And my interests are college basketball, the stock market, business, and basics: hanging out with friends and family.

Why did you choose to attend IU?

I'm from Indianapolis, so it was in my backyard, pretty much, and I knew that the Kelley School was pretty dominant in the business area and I knew I wanted to do business, so it was a no-brainer.

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

I'd say overall the most meaningful thing that I've done here is get involved with Student Alumni Association. This is my second family here with all my friends and just meeting

staff recently, it's been a huge help, you know, making campus seem a lot smaller and just getting my hands dirty with different projects and whatnot.

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

Definitely get involved outside of class. It will make your college experience a lot better. If you just study all the time and sit in your room, you're not going to enjoy college and you're not going to get out and meet people and have fun experiences. I'd say the main thing is get involved in something.

What is LeaderShape?

LeaderShape is a one-week program designed to focus on enhancing students' leadership skills; network skills; how to create a vision or long-term and short-term goals. It's hosted by Student Alumni Association and it's at IU and it's at a bunch of other campuses around the U.S. – so IU is not the only campus to host it. And it's mainly focused on sophomores and juniors who will be coming back that can implement their visions, or their dreams, or whatever they've picked, at their respective organizations at IU.

How did you find out about LeaderShape, and why did you decide to become involved?

I first found out about LeaderShape through SAA. I was a director at the time, so I'd been helping coordinate LeaderShape, and I decided to go that year as well. I was a sophomore, so it was in 2005. I wanted to become involved because I knew that I had leadership skills that needed to be, you know, enhanced, and it's just a growing process. No one's perfect in leadership, and I just wanted to better myself in that area – help myself and my organization.

How do you think your involvement in LeaderShape has affected your leadership skills?

I'd say the biggest thing – I was thinking about it – I was challenged during LeaderShape to come out of my shell a little bit more. I was more shy and reserved a couple years ago, and I was challenged a lot on not thinking as much on what I'm going to say – if I have something to say, just come out and say it, and not overanalyze it or the situation. It was hard at first, but I'm glad that I worked on it. It helped me to become more personable, I guess, and able to communicate better with other people and work toward achieving any type of common goal.

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

I'd say Homecoming was my most exciting thing that I've been a part of at IU. My freshman year, the first time I got involved with SAA was through Homecoming – just helping out with the float, being in the parade, coordinating some of the different events that we had that weekend. My high school was really big into Homecoming, so that was something that I was drawn to – helping out with Homecoming and being in this huge parade and just having a good time.

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

I'm a part of a Christian group called Navigators. They meet on Fridays and it's just – they have kind of like a worship service and I've met a lot of good friends through that – going to church with them, and I went on spring break with them to Colorado Springs my sophomore year and it was just a lot of fun, and those are another part of my core group of friends that I've had here.

What have you gained through your interactions with IU alumni?

I'd say the biggest thing is just finding out more about the Alumni Association and getting that aspect. I've met a lot of staff within the Alumni Center that have been able to help me connect with alumni, and I'd say the biggest thing is getting involved with the chapters after I graduate. I'll be in Chicago, so I'm planning on getting involved in the Chicago chapter.

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

I'd say, going off the last question, some of my future goals are just staying connected with the Alumni Association. I guess within SAA that's a huge goal, just to not, like, give up on, you know, my college experience and to continue that even after I graduate. And then another goal is, being a business major, I want to advance my career in that industry and just learn more about business and work my way up into a company and get my MBA eventually.

What will you miss the most when you graduate?

I'd say the biggest thing I'm going to miss is all my friends here. This is, especially within the Student Alumni Association, this is my family – more than friends. It's been tough thinking about how I'm not going to be able to see them all the time. I guess it's a goal for me to stay connected and to keep in contact with everyone because that's hard once you – when you don't see somebody for a long time – so friends definitely are going to be the biggest thing.

We've been talking with Sean Cork from the IU 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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