



From Student to Faculty

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My time at The University of Akron started in an atypical way: as a transfer student who was interested in studying abroad. When I visited UA, I noticed a flyer about a trip to Greece that the College of Business Administration was offering a few months later, and I thought it sounded great. I contacted the professor who was leading the trip, Dr. Steve Ash, and attended an informational meeting. Many of the students had already been planning the trip for several months by that time, and I was worried that it would be a challenge to travel overseas without really knowing anyone. But after getting to know the other students, I soon realized that fitting in would not be a

problem. And was it ever a good fit! I had an incredible summer traveling to Greece, Italy, and France, taking business classes and learning about the rich history Europe has to offer. But what's more, I met wonderful people—my fellow travelers—who became my first friends at The University of Akron and who I'm blessed to call friends today.

Upon my return, I was more excited than ever to be a Zip. I had a great experience finishing my Bachelor of Science in Business Administration focused in International Business while getting involved in student organizations such as Beta Gamma Sigma and Golden Key International Honor Societies. I made more good friends and networked with supportive faculty such as Dr. Andrew Thomas, who introduced me to the idea of pursuing a career in academia. So, I applied to UA's Master of Business Administration program. I accepted an offer to enter the program as well as a graduate assistantship, where I got my first taste of academic research and teaching and knew it was the right career path for me.

The decision to focus on academia lead me to pursue a PhD in Business Administration (Marketing) from The University of Memphis. My husband, Joe, and I enjoyed our time living in the southern United States and, all the while, continued to keep in touch with the wonderful mentors who had guided me in my undergraduate and graduate studies at UA. Upon my graduation from the PhD program, I had a great experience starting my academic career at Ohio University. When I had the opportunity to apply for an open position in

the Department of Marketing at The University of Akron, I was excited about the prospect of returning to a campus and the Northeast Ohio region that I have always loved. I love being an assistant professor of Marketing at The University of Akron. I once sat at the same desks where my students currently sit, and now am privileged to be the one doing the teaching. In addition to Drs. Ash and Thomas, I am forever grateful for the support I received from Drs. Terry Daugherty, Federico de Gregorio, Deborah Owens, and Debmalya Mukherjee from my time as a student, and I am now blessed to call them colleagues. It is a joy for me to be a part of The University of Akron's campus, from my days as a student to my current life as a faculty member.

I encourage my students to get involved on campus and happily share with them that studying abroad is my favorite memory from my time as an undergraduate student. I am excited to be a part of the awesome Northeast Ohio region and look forward to seeing the Zips continue to prevail. Hail we Akron!