

## The Great Lakes of Adrian

*The Young Alumni Club allows recent Adrian College graduates the chance to give back via an affordable monthly gift. This gift can be applied to support any area of campus.*

*This month's profile features Caitlin Lake, a 2011 graduate from Muskegon, MI.*

One of the commemorative bricks that will be unveiled in front of Spencer Hall, during homecoming festivities this fall will read "The Great Lakes of Adrian," although it will not honor any bodies of water. Instead, it will honor Caitlin Lake and her father James, both of whom are graduates of Adrian College.

Caitlin is a legacy student of AC, although it almost didn't happen. The young alumni donor said she was "floundering" when picking a college coming out of high school until her dad suggested she check out his alma mater.

"I was kind of hesitant but with my father's encouragement and seeing how awesome campus and the faculty was put me at ease," she said. "I wasn't quite sure what I wanted to do and it was nice knowing the faculty and staff were truly interested in helping me pursue something that I would be successful in."

Caitlin floundered no longer after visiting AC. Once on campus, Caitlin was an active member of the student body. She was the Vice President of Student Government Association (SGA), a member of Alpha Phi, and helped out with promotional events for Campus Activities Network (CAN).

When she officially became a Young Alumni Club member, Caitlin chose to have her donation go towards her sorority where she made lifelong friendships and developed leadership skills.

"It was nice to have that foundation of girls and support," she said. "If I can help other girls find that support I think that's great."

The business department had an even greater impact on Caitlin during her time as a Bulldog. When she decided to switch majors, it was Patrick Quinlan who gave her the confidence to do so.

"He was really receptive and interested in what I wanted to pursue, what interests I had, and what skills I thought I had," she said. "He was really encouraging and it was genuine. Having him as a professor and department director, that's literally the educational reason why you attend a place like Adrian."

Caitlin said becoming a business major turned out to be a great decision, as she now works as a marketing manager for Arconic, an aerospace company.

"Leaving Adrian, I was completely confident about going into the workforce," she said. "I felt like I could be a valuable asset to a company that hired me, even right out of school."

Caitlin went on to add the small size Adrian helps students to develop their skills and personality.

“[Adrian] is a small enough school that you didn’t dissolve into the background,” she said. “The people there are so dynamic in how you come out because you are being noticed, you’re getting attention, what you do does matter.”

Caitlin said she felt empowered, even in a department that is primarily male.

“I never once felt like I was treated differently as a female business student,” she said. “I was so encouraged and so empowered. When I was at Adrian I never felt there was a disconnect between men and women in the workplace. It didn’t matter I was a girl.”

The brick that will be unveiled at homecoming is a gift for her father James, a ’69 graduate. Caitlin said she became closer to her father when she chose to come to AC.

“It was special to share so many memories in the same place,” she said. “The brick symbolizes the significance of both of us spending so much time in Peele and Mahan as well as tailgating.”