

Ingram Scholar Alumni Spotlight



ANNIE LONGENECKER ROBERTS, Class of 2007

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DEGREES

B.A, Communication Studies, Vanderbilt University

CURRENT LOCATION

Nashville, TN

CURRENT EMPLOYER

Self-Employed

CURRENT OCCUPATION

I currently work with a large, online skincare brand and run a dreamy, little Nashville AirBnB.

DESCRIBE YOUR CAREER PATH

Entering Vanderbilt as a musician with an interest in business and communications, I planned to go into music business. However, after interning at CMA and CMT my senior year, I found a passion for the people side of business. I landed a position at a fast-growing recruiting firm where I saw ample opportunity for promotion based on merit. I worked hard day in and day out and looked for ways to take on extra responsibilities and solve problems. As I proved myself and helped the company grow, I was able to earn multiple promotions that led me to a flexible and fulfilling dual role as a PR Manager and Corporate Recruiter. Spearheading

meaningful monthly, nationwide, community service projects that the company has sustained in my absence is something I am most proud of to this day. I was eventually recruited away to a railroad transportation company to develop its talent acquisition and branding strategy. I loved the challenge of learning about an entirely different industry and its rich history within American economics, and bringing a new recruitment brand story to life. After my time with the railroad, I worked as a talent acquisition consultant for a mid-sized company based in Boston. This was perhaps my favorite “corporate” role, in which I worked closely with my client to create a recruitment brand story and strategic recruitment model to scale its business. My current career endeavors include working with a large, online skincare brand and running our dreamy little AirBnB in Nashville.

HOW DID THE INGRAM SCHOLARS PROGRAM PREPARE YOU FOR WHAT YOU ARE DOING TODAY?

The Program offered a safe, challenging, group setting in which we could learn important lessons, hone skills and have first-time experiences that may be used to our advantage later. Our Program Director instilled in us the importance of planning, communicating with others, always arriving five minutes early, dressing for the job you want, preparing for every meeting, and taking time to reflect on our work. During our Wednesday meetings, we were challenged to listen to, respond to and present ideas in diverse group settings. For our Summer Project, we worked to create a business plan, which included a budget and travel plan, implement that plan and report back on the experience. Even today, as I raise my own children, build businesses and serve my community, those valuable lessons, skills and experiences are still influential in my life.

IF YOU COULD DESCRIBE THE INGRAM SCHOLARS PROGRAM IN THREE WORDS WHAT WOULD THEY BE?

Encouraging, challenging and humbling.

WHAT DOES THE INGRAM SCHOLAR COMMUNITY MEAN TO YOU?

The Ingram Scholar Community is made up of some of the most influential and inspiring people in my life. The scholars are people I would describe as ambitious, powerful and goal-oriented, and in the same breath as authentic, humble and compassionate. They are the kind of people you can count on with both the big and the smallest things. This diverse, stimulating, hard-working community/family is one I respect immensely and am so humbled to be part of.

BEST INGRAM SCHOLAR MEMORY

My favorite Ingram Scholar memory is my entire Summer Project in Durban, South Africa, with fellow Ingram Scholar, Palmer (Harston) Williams. We spent our days serving an orphanage full of infants who had been abandoned by mothers with AIDS. Some days we sang to the babies in the sunshine and others we cried with the babies in pain. I’ll never forget seeing the “Big Five” on a weekend safari, dipping our toes in the Indian Ocean or learning to drive stick on the “wrong” side of the road. Those beautiful babies and the gorgeous African landscape stole a big piece of my heart, and I am forever thankful for the experience.

WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR CURRENT SCHOLARS WHO WANT TO MAKE THE MOST OF THEIR INGRAM SCHOLAR EXPERIENCE?

This program will give you back as much as you put into it. The relationships you build now could shape your future, so spend this time developing them! Ask your most inspiring professors and fellow students to grab coffee or have a chat. Seek out people who you aspire to be like in your career or life—what a blessing if you can connect to a great mentor at this early age. Find friends who don't sound, think or look like you and learn from them. The Ingram Scholars Program will challenge you to be the best version of yourself that you can be. My advice? Take advantage of this incredible opportunity and rise to the challenge!