

Ingram Scholar Alumni Spotlight



Peachy and her son Franklin

PEACHY MYERS, Class of 2000

DEGREES

B.A., Sociology, Vanderbilt University

MPAff, LBJ School of Public Affairs, University of Texas

CURRENT LOCATION

Austin, TX

CURRENT EMPLOYER

Self-Employed

CURRENT OCCUPATION

I started my own business two years ago. As a nonprofit consultant, I help organizations (that are doing work I deeply care about) expand their capacity to engage community members in meaningful ways and raise the funds they need to achieve their ambitious goals.

DESCRIBE YOUR CAREER PATH

Winding! My career path has included providing college students with opportunities to serve their community through the academic curriculum; helping seniors in San Francisco navigate their way through homelessness; finding shelter for Hurricane Katrina evacuees after the

storm; serving on Barack Obama's original campaign leadership team and organizing in battleground states to elect our country's first black president; working for the White House and playing a key role in the development and implementation of President Obama's national service agenda; engaging community members in the local fight for affordable housing and integrating neighborhoods all over Austin; and, now, working with organizations committed to securing voting rights, criminal justice reform, humane border policy, and paid family leave. Next up? I hope to support the grassroots organizations working hard to elect more women and people of color at all levels of government.

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

The service opportunities I sought out as an Ingram Scholar brought my academic studies on race, poverty, and inequality to life. I learned invaluable lessons from the people I met in Nashville's prisons, Chicago's public housing, Milwaukee's streets, Appalachia's health clinics, Detroit's schools, and Boston's community centers. Those experiences inspired me to pursue a professional path that would continue to put me in proximity to people's pain, enabling me to make a deeper impact on the ground *and* in the halls of power where policy decisions are made.

The Ingram Scholars Program also taught me the importance of supporting the work of other change makers and giving more people the chance to become change makers themselves.

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

My Favorite People

WHAT DOES THE INGRAM SCHOLAR COMMUNITY MEAN TO YOU?

A lifelong circle of brilliant, kind, brave, inspiring, supportive friends.

BEST INGRAM SCHOLAR MEMORY

Hmm. So many. But probably freshman year orientation when, amid all my nerves and excitement, I remember being struck by an overwhelming sense of awe at the opportunity and responsibility I'd just been given. That feeling has never gone away.

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

Stay open to possibilities for your future - both near and far - that you may never have imagined for yourself. Some of my very best experiences have unfolded because I decided to turn this way, not that, and walk down unexpected paths.