

ALUMNI

NAU Alumni Spotlight: Kyle Garcia Enjoys Career Success While Earning NAU Degree



In 2003, NAU alumnus, Kyle Garcia was working for AOL-Time Warner. The company had sponsored a professional development day for its employees. Kyle took part and it was there he was introduced to National American University (NAU).

“A representative from NAU in Albuquerque explained that I could continue working full time and still take classes,” said Kyle. “That appealed to me.”

About a year later, and while working toward his Associate’s degree in Business Administration, the company promoted Kyle to the position of Trainer for Sales.

“This involved a lot more traveling, but NAU worked with me and I transitioned from classes at the campus to online classes,” said Kyle.

Kyle continued to take about one class per quarter, fitting his education around his busy work schedule.

In 2007, when AOL closed operations, Kyle was hired on by Minolta as its Sales Trainer for the Pacific Northwest which required he relocate to Portland, Oregon.

Nearly two years later he was brought on at Gerber, a division of Fiskars Brands Inc., as its Director of Customer Service. In 2012 he was promoted again, this time serving as the Director of Sales and Operations for the company’s Europe, Middle East and Asia territories.

“My wife and I relocated to Germany for this position,” said Kyle. “It was a good move and a great opportunity at that time in my career. While in Germany, I earned my associate’s degree and secured my APICS certification.”

APICS is a certification pursued by supply chain professionals. It is a prestigious certification with very specific expectations. Typically, certification follows graduation, but Kyle, who now serves on the APICS Portland Chapter Board of Directors as its Director of Speaking Engagements, earned his certification while still pursuing his degree.

In addition to getting his NAU degree and APICS certification while in Germany, Kyle and his wife celebrated another life milestone.

“We welcomed our first child,” said Kyle. “We had been in Germany for 4 years and with our new baby, we were ready to get back to the states to be closer to our families.”

So, four years after moving to Germany, Kyle’s growing family moved back to Portland, Oregon where he secured a position with Adidas, the fastest growing shoe company in the world, as its Senior Demand Planning Manager, where he continues to work today. At about that same time, Kyle re-enrolled with NAU to pursue a Bachelor of Science in Management, which he earned this spring.

“I am really proud to be associated with Adidas, a company that is at the forefront of important social issues,” said Kyle. “They were voted number one in the nation for its efforts to develop a diverse workforce.”

Adidas is also a corporate leader in sustainability initiatives. Last year the company released a new shoe and apparel line made from plastic debris found in the ocean and switched from plastic shopping bags to paper in its retail stores, among other initiatives.



“The number of water bottles in the ocean would cover the State of New Mexico,” remarked Kyle.

Kyle’s career and his quest for a college degree proceeded on parallel paths, a trajectory made possible by NAU’s flexible scheduling and online learning opportunities.

Kyle has also given back to his *alma mater*. He has volunteered for *NAU Match!*, the university’s alumni-student mentoring program.

“Mentoring is a way I can give back,” said Kyle. “I’ve been very fortunate to enjoy some career success, learning and growing with each position I’ve taken, and I am grateful to NAU for being so flexible as I built my career.”

“I enjoy being able to help students who are also juggling jobs and families. I’ve been there.”