



**Cara Kelley, '17 and '18**  
**Client Success Manager, Suzy**

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"Why?" is the central question that drives Cara Kelley's career. As a client success manager for Suzy, a consumer research software platform, Kelley aims to identify the "why" for consumers and share those insights with the company's clients. The two-time Gaylord College graduate, who earned a bachelor's degree in public relations in 2017 and a master's degree in strategic communication in 2018, recently shared how her time at OU prepared her for this career path, her favorite memories while on campus, advice for current students and more.

**What is your favorite memory from your time at Gaylord College?**

My favorite memories (I don't just have one!) are from Lindsey + Asp. From the people that I met (many of whom I still keep in touch with) to the client facing roles that we were able to have as students, I still talk about those experiences to this day. I remember the Lindsey + Asp space being a

management) helping a number of brands with different research projects. Whether that be testing different packaging designs, comparing copy points or simply getting a pulse on their consumers' behaviors, I help them answer the "why" as to what they should be doing.

**What do you consider to be the most significant moments of your career so far?**

The most significant moments of my career so far include the time that I worked on an approximately eight-month-long pitch that we ended up winning and having to kick off and deliver a full-360 campaign within two months of winning the business. Other moments include successfully delivering on campaigns that had high budgets, VERY tight timelines and well-known famous faces. I have been faced with many challenges, but I appreciate each and every one of them because that is when you learn the most about yourself

collaborative/supportive space that students would sit in between classes and at night and was always a fun space to connect with your college friends.

**Do you have a favorite faculty/staff member at Gaylord?**

Pritch (Pritchard) and Debbie (Yount) will forever be my role models at Gaylord. Pritch and Debbie are so passionate about PR and advertising and really go out of their way to ensure students are set up for success. From networking events to capstone courses, Pritch and Debbie really put their hearts into the college and the students, something that I believe to be unique and really worthwhile for all who graduate from Gaylord.

**How did your career path lead you to Suzy?**

Throughout my career in both shopper marketing and advertising, I worked on many campaigns that relied heavily on consumer insights. Whether that be studying a consumer's path to purchase across different retailers or understanding which offers resonate best with consumers, everything I did was driven by data. I've worked on brands like Rachel Zoe, Hershey, Danone, Subway and more - every move that we made was dependent on consumer behaviors and trends. I recently worked on a global project where we ultimately took one foundational brand strategy and applied it to markets across the world. What was unique here is that we really had to understand how consumers are behaving across these different markets (through research) and tailor this strategy to be applicable to the respective market. For so long I had been working to answer the "why" - why do we need this specific offer, why are consumers engaging with this commercial more than this one - and I wanted to continue down that path to help brands be successful in an ever changing market (especially with everything that has happened over the past year).

**Describe your role at Suzy.**

I am a client success manager (account

and these moments allow you to grow both personally and professionally.

**How did Gaylord College prepare you for your future career?**

Gaylord provides students with a number of opportunities to excel in their career - Lindsey + Asp, Top Jobs, Ad Club, capstone classes and more. There is so much to take advantage of so whichever path you want to take after college, there is opportunity to get there. And I HIGHLY encourage every student to take advantage of what's in front of them at Gaylord. There are so many smart people to learn from, so take advantage of it!

**What advice would you give to current students aspiring to a career in mass communication?**

There are so many areas you can work in within the mass communication industry, so I highly recommend you talk to as many people as you can to learn about their current roles, careers, interests, how they got to where they are, etc. Take the time to talk and listen so you can better understand what might be out there for you. This also builds connections for down the road.

**What do you do for fun outside of work?**

I currently live in New York City so outside of work you can find me visiting different museums, trying out different restaurants, traveling (when able to) and I recently started painting (or attempting to, ha!).

**Are there any other organizations or projects you're involved with outside of your full-time job that you want to highlight?**

I am involved in a nonprofit volunteering organization that has allowed me to meet and network with amazing people from around the U.S., as well as give back to the NYC community. I highly encourage individuals right out of school to get involved in programs or organizations outside of work because it 1) helps get your mind off of the work day and 2) allows you to branch outside of your current friend and colleague group and meet new people!



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