

INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE & PRODUCT DESIGN

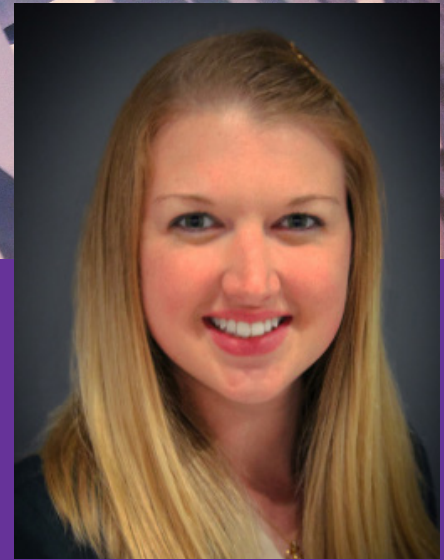
IAPD ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Kayla Sorensen is a 2012 IAPD graduate. Upon graduation Kayla went to work as an Industrial Designer for The HON Company which is under the parent company HNI Corporation. HNI owns numerous office manufacturers, such as Gunlocke, Paoli, HBF, Allsteel, Maxon and Artcobell. In her position as Industrial Designer she was able to work on projects with a majority of those different companies. The projects varied in scale; one day she might be designing a desk or a table, and the next she might be designing a foot for a case-good series. "In my role as a designer, which was very much influenced by the diverse background I got from IAPD, helped me to facilitate conversations across the cross-functional groups on a project. I was able to speak engineering, graphic design and marketing languages; it proved to be one of the most beneficial things in my projects."

After working for three years with The HON Company as an Industrial Designer, Kayla was ready for a change. An opportunity came along to move to Allsteel as an Associate Product Business Manager for Fabrics and Finishes. In this role, she is on a team that manages the surface material collection for HON and Allsteel, as well as leads HNI's strategic direction for the category. "My IAPD education comes in handy now from another realm when speaking with suppliers and mills to hone paint colors, fabric constructions and to also work with the Product Managers of other categories to determine which finishes should be offered on which products."

Kayla's job has allowed her the opportunity to travel to some great places such as San Diego, Detroit, Charlotte and Boston just to name a few. "The coolest was going to Detroit to the GM Headquarters building and touring that facility and then going to the auto show afterwards. Fun fact: the GM lobby was in one of the Transformers movies as the CIA Headquarters!"

While at K-State Kayla enjoyed all her IAPD classes but one of her favorites was the Visual Communications class. "What I think most benefited me about my education was the diversity of both the staff as well as the classes. Since we focused on the whole design experience in every class, it was so ingrained in me upon graduation. With this attitude towards design, it has allowed me to understand design challenges for what they truly are - opportunities and to never forget the client!"



Kayla Sorensen
2012 IAPD Grad

"After being more involved with architecture and design firms and furniture dealerships in my current role, I always hear great things about IAPD. When they hear I graduated from K-State's IAPD, I get some variation of 'Oh, you got a great education, you know what you're doing.' Never underestimate the power of what you're working towards everyday!"

Advice From Kayla:

Integrate the business aspect into your education when possible because it is important to understand the importance of knowing cost, perceived value, inventory, brand recognition, forecasted sales and margins.

Tie decisions back to your client or customer whenever possible.

Have Fun!

APDESIGN

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