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Alumni profile: Gary McCarrick takes his Grizzly pride on the road

Gary McCarrick, CAS '97, loves to show his support for his alma mater. When he is not shuttling between his homes in West Bloomfield, Mich., and Atlanta, McCarrick travels the globe as part of his career with the Fair Isaac Corporation, sharing his enthusiasm for Oakland University along the way.

"I drive my car in Atlanta with my Oakland University license plate. I occasionally bump into OU alumni in airports because I usually have some sort of OU gear on be it in Peru, Colombia, Mexico, Canada, on my way to India through Europe. It's very cool to see other alumni recognize the school. Plus, I think it's cool to wear OU gear in another country let alone the other side of the world," said McCarrick. "I'm trying to showcase the university for what it is: a great platform to help you excel and grow into the person you want to be and can be. I'm more than happy to be an ambassador for the school, not only domestically but internationally as well."

McCarrick began his OU career in the third grade as a theatre arts camper. Then, as a freshman in high school, he participated in Coach Greg Kampe's basketball camp. "I remember making it to the final championship game of that camp and winning the final game. I'll never forget it. Putting on that Oakland University jersey was a true highlight," McCarrick said.

Today, McCarrick wears a similar OU basketball jersey when he travels. He explains, "I've always kept in touch with Coach Kampe, so I asked him how I could buy a basketball jersey to wear around airports and represent Oakland's athletic program. He was nice enough to send me a game jersey. Now I wear it when I travel. I recommend this kind of support to all alumni who want to give back to the university."

McCarrick, who sees OU as "a diamond in the rough," hopes to one day have a say in the university's direction or offer insight that will help propel his alma mater into the future and beyond. His efforts to date go well beyond advertising Oakland across the world with his clothing. "What I strive to do is to represent the university well in everything I do. I know how I perform in the workplace is a reflection on where I came from. I make sure everyone knows I am from Oakland University," he said.

As an intern with PASS Sports (now Fox Sports Detroit), McCarrick began building his professional resume before graduation. The internship led to a job as a sports producer for Bernie Smilovitz at WDIV Channel 4-Detroit. "The best part about getting the job at WDIV was that I was still a student at OU, competing against graduates of UM, MSU, Syracuse and University of Miami-Florida for the position. Bernie knew how willing I was to do what ever it took to get the job done," McCarrick said.

"I told him, 'I want to do what everyone wants to do, and what no one wants to do.' I realized that doing the everyday mundane things would lay the foundation, and once I gained Bernie's trust he would let me do the things that not many people get to do, like being in the Red Wings locker room interviewing the players after they beat the Philadelphia Flyers in the 1997 Stanley Cup Finals. Or interviewing people like George Clooney, Michael Jordan, Barry Sanders, Michelle Kwan, Troy Aikman, and so on," said McCarrick. "The best part was I got paid to do it, but in all honesty I would have paid them for the experience."

Today at Fair Isaac, McCarrick works as a Solutions Integration Consultant, implementing, configuring and installing computer software for Fortune 500 companies around the world.

McCarrick describes the best part of his OU education as "the way the school kept me humble, never let me get overconfident, and really helped me understand the value of working hard. Nothing is ever handed to you."

Part of that philosophy was learned from McCarrick's experiences on the court. "I love basketball, but my strength was defense and rebounding—doing whatever it took to succeed. Basically that same philosophy has helped me get where I am today. I wasn't a flashy player but I was consistent, learned from my mistakes and became a better person for it."



McCarrick's travels have taken him around the world. Here, he sits atop a Teotihuacan pyramid, near Mexico City, Mexico.

SUMMARY

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