

GOLD GRADUATE OF THE LAST DECADE



Carl Tiede '17

Major: Computer Science

Current Job: IT Manager at Abdo LLP

What did Concordia mean to you as a student?

For me, Concordia was a place where I felt a deep sense of community, artistic expression, responsible involvement in the world around me, and a place to figure out more of who I was and wanted to become.

What does Concordia mean to you now?

The friends I made at Concordia are lifelong, with several of them being people I see every month if not more frequently. The music ensembles still represent the greatest expression of beauty, peace, and the human condition. There are precious few things in the world that bring people together with a common purpose the same way that music does.

What is a life lesson you learned in college? What is a life lesson you have learned since graduating?

I remember being told that “while you are in college, you will have three key things: friends, sleep, and studies. Each day, you can pick two.” There was some truth to it but, since graduating, I have found this isn’t the whole picture as there are other things in life that I will always be seeking to balance. Whether it’s friends and family, career, physical health, mental health, being active in my community, keeping up with current events, travel, leisure, or broader education, we have a finite amount of time to allot to any one of these. There isn’t a foolproof formula for how much time and energy all of these should receive, but don’t shirk the ones we do know (diet, sleep, etc.) or you will find they will come back

to bring down the time and energy you can allocate to other corners in life.

Did you have any defining moments at Concordia that helped shape you as a person?

Several moments and experiences that shaped me as a person come to mind:

- Studying abroad in Spain.
- Being part of the choirs and stepping up to do the best I could as a leader in the choirs.
- Getting invited to join some guys at a League of Legends tournament – five of these people stood by my side six years later as some of my groomsmen.
- Working in ITS without question was formative in my career path. I was able to graduate already having relevant office and IT experience, which helped me to land a full-time IT job before I had completed my degree.

How did your time at Concordia prepare you for your current work?

Working at the Solution Center on campus gave me a huge leg up on my peers who came into the job force with no prior work experience. While not solely attributed to my education at Concordia, honing my critical thinking skills and my ability to communicate clearly and concisely has been invaluable in my career.

What advice do you have for future Cobbers?

- Study abroad. If you can afford the expense, I cannot stress upon you how wonderful and formative the experience will be. If you can break your comfort zone and go to a place where you must have another language in your tool belt, even better. As you get older, it will become harder to truly experience another culture.
- Be a part of at least one extracurricular group. For me, that was choir. Choir is where I made friends, memories, and found peace when things were stressful.
- Find some work while you are in school. Ideally something related to your desired career or area of study, but any work experience is better than no work experience. This will help you maintain discipline, buffer your resume ahead of when you graduate, and give you the soft skills you need in the workplace.