

# TOMMIES

## IN OUR COMMUNITIES



**CAITLYN GOMEZ  
SCHAEFFER '11**

Living in: Omaha, NE



### From Omaha to Everywhere

As Caitlyn Gomez Schaeffer '11, a proud University of St. Thomas alumna, reflects on her transformative years at St. Thomas, she credits the university for being the foundation of her life and career trajectory.

Caitlyn chose St. Thomas because it was similar to Creighton University in Omaha, but offered her the opportunity to move away from home and challenge herself in ways that staying in her hometown wouldn't. A generous scholarship not only made St. Thomas possible but also opened doors to dream-worthy experiences.

Through a transferable scholarship, Caitlyn spent a year abroad—six months in Spain and six months in Argentina—becoming conversationally fluent in Spanish. These immersive experiences, along with volunteering with VISION during J-Term, equipped her with invaluable skills that have shaped her personal and professional life.

After graduating from St. Thomas, Caitlyn began her career as an admissions counselor, which revealed her passion for recruiting. She transitioned to the oil industry in North Dakota during its historic boom, helping a company grow from 10 to 150 employees and eventually becoming a partner. Later, she pursued her Executive MBA at UNO and currently thrives as a Business Development Manager for Westlake Commercial, a division of Ace Hardware.

St. Thomas's mission—to educate morally responsible leaders who think critically and work for the common good—continues to inspire Caitlyn. Guided by this ethos, she remains an advocate for integrity and leadership, crediting university mentors like Tonia Peterson, Karen Lange and Tori Svoboda for their lasting influence.

# TOMMIES

## IN OUR COMMUNITIES



### CAITLYN GOMEZ SCHAEFFER '11, CONTINUED

Caitlyn encourages current and prospective students to embrace boldness and curiosity. "Be fearless and take a leap of faith," she says, echoing her own journey of growth and self-discovery. She also highlights the university's top-tier academics, vibrant campus life and unparalleled study abroad opportunities as reasons to make St. Thomas a top choice for higher education.

Today, Caitlyn stays active through her local EMBA alumni network, rock climbing adventures with her children and cherished gatherings with friends. While she has traded Davanni's cheese bread for Omaha's local fare, her memories of St. Thomas remain a cornerstone of her story.

#### SOUND BITES

##### On St. Thomas Shaping Life

"I am not a bystander. I am not afraid to speak up for others, for myself or to challenge the status quo. UST is a part of why I will always raise my voice for the common good."

##### On Living the Mission

"St. Thomas's mission is integral to the ethics, integrity and passion I have carried with me in all of my roles since graduation. St. Thomas is more than academics, it is a way of life, guided by principles in how to be a good person."

##### Advice for Current Tommies

"Appreciate the opportunity you have, don't go along with everything you're told, ask a lot of questions and learn from your own mistakes. Don't be afraid of questions, of mistakes. That's when the real magic happens."

##### Career Advice

"Be bold, be fearless. There is no better time to do it than today. Don't be afraid to take a leap of faith, it can make a huge difference for you in the long run. Too many people tell themselves 'I can't.' Look in the mirror and tell yourself, 'Yes, I can!'"

##### Words for Prospective Students

"St. Thomas offers a beautiful campus, rigorous academics, solid sports programs, networking in a huge city, faith building programs, and study abroad programs that are hard to compete with. I was so fortunate to attend St. Thomas, and I'll never regret my decision. You'll always have the opportunity to reconnect with people in your network back home but the skills you stand to gain by going out of state won't always be an opportunity you can capitalize on."