

EF OUTSTANDING YOUNG ALUMNI AWARDEE

The EF Outstanding Young Alumni Award was created in 2021 to recognize the outstanding achievements of individuals who have distinguished themselves post high school through professional accomplishments and who have demonstrated the qualities of integrity and character early in their careers. The recipient must have graduated from Elizabeth Forward High School less than 15 years ago.



DYLAN SHAFFER Class of 2014

Dylan Shaffer and his employer, ALDI, both are on the fast track to success. Since joining ALDI in early 2018 upon his accelerated college graduation, Shaffer has rapidly advanced from a trainee in the district manager training program to Executive Manager in the ALDI's national real estate office. ALDI, in turn, is the fastest-growing grocery chain in the United States with more than 2,300 stores over 38 states with over 25,000 employees.

His rapid ascent up the corporate management ladder shouldn't be a surprise based upon his past record of success and involvement inside and outside the classroom since his days at EF.

Shaffer's post-secondary educational journey began at Penn State University. A passion for writing led him to pursue journalism there. After just one semester at University Park, Shaffer knew he needed to be closer to a city. He transferred to the University of Pittsburgh for his second year. In 2017, he graduated summa cum laude from Pitt

with a Bachelor of Arts in Media and Professional Communications, a certificate in Corporate and Community Relations and a minor in Theatre Arts – all of this in three years of college instead of four.

During his entire academic tenure, Shaffer maintained multiple part-time jobs. He was a resident assistant at Pitt and an intern for three seasons with the Pittsburgh Festival Opera, previously known as the Opera Theatre of Pittsburgh. His opera experience enabled him to learn first-hand the impact arts have on the community from a lens other than an actor's. When the EF High School musical producer position opened, Shaffer knew he had to apply. He was hired and co-produced EF's 2016 musical and solo produced EF's 2017 musical.

In November of his last year of college, Shaffer received a job offer from ALDI. A month after college graduation, he started as a manager trainee in the Saxonburg division of ALDI. Through this experience, Shaffer learned all facets of store operations, grocery retail and personnel management. He trained for a year before overseeing a low sales volume district of stores which included Belle Vernon, Waynesburg and Uniontown. Over the next three years, his district would change and grow as ALDI accelerated its expansion in the United States. He eventually would oversee six stores – the highest sales volume district in the Pittsburgh area - including local stores in McKeesport, West Mifflin, Bethel Park and Peters Township.

His success earned him a promotion in the summer of 2021. Shaffer was promoted to Executive Manager in the ALDI National Real Estate office, based outside of Columbus, OH. In his day-to-day work, Shaffer manages the look and feel of the ALDI US stores. His role entails designing, testing and implementing new shelving and fixtures in ALDI US 2,300 stores. He also manages the interior environmental graphics for all stores. ALDI is the third largest supermarket chain in the U.S. behind Walmart and Kroger.

In Shaffer's spare time, he pursues his passions for writing and golfing. He has reviewed theatrical performances for an online publishing site for the past five years. He also actively volunteers as an assistant coach for The First Tee, a national youth golf development program. By seamlessly integrating the game of golf with a life skills curriculum, the program creates active learning experiences that build inner strength, self-confidence and resilience that kids can carry to everything they do.

Although Shaffer lives in Columbus, OH, now, he continues to give back to the Elizabeth community. In 2019, he established a musical award program to participants of the high school musical. The next year, he transitioned this to a scholarship through the EFSD-T.D.Club "Warrior" Open. The Shaffer Family Scholarship provides an annual grant to an EF student who has an appreciation of the arts, regardless of their post-high school plans.

Shaffer is the son of Keith Sr. and Nancy (Lakovic) Shaffer. Keith Jr. and Matthew are his older brothers. The entire Shaffer family has graduated from EF.