



Brooke Polson Ilan Ramon Kesher 2001

Among the very first students at Ilan Ramon Day School (previously known as Heschel West), Brooke Polson (23 years old), believes that her success in life is due, in large part, to her formative years at IRDS (then Heschel West) where her parents, Susan and Gary Polson, were part of a group of four founding families. These families started the school because they wanted a solid, Jewish, experiential learning environment for their children and for the growing Conejo Jewish community.

While a young student at the school, Brooke remembers that she watched her parents help build the school and learned from them “how to believe in something and work really hard against the odds to do something you really believe in.” Starting an independent day school in the Conejo Valley with a vision to educate future generations gave Brooke the conviction to “take action,” even if the goal seems difficult to achieve. Above all else, Brooke claims that Ilan Ramon Day School

(previously known as Heschel West) gave her the confidence to do whatever she believed in. The supportive community, along with having been brought up in a loving family environment, is what Brooke cherishes about her elementary school years. “Knowing people root for you and believe in you” is, without doubt, what gives Brooke the ability to do well in her life.

Throughout her secondary school years, whether she became part of a dance team or an active member in her sorority, Brooke closely watched her parents continue their strong leadership roles. With an abundance of determination, she says, “I want to be a leader in whatever I do.”

Brooke attended San Diego State University for the past four years and graduated in June. She made the most of her time in college, going beyond her “regular” course load. She interned for Congressman Elton Gallegly in Washington, D.C. during her junior year, and she studied abroad in Florence, Italy, during her senior year. In both of these instances, Brooke was faced with living in a new place, far away from home, not knowing anyone. Brooke was not deterred; instead, she took charge and created a wonderful environment for herself, making new, lifelong friendships. She believes, “My years at Heschel West (now IRDS) gave me the chance to adapt to anything, and helped me realize the importance of making a community and family for yourself wherever I am.” The ultimate goal for her is to “make it work and be happy in whatever situation I find myself in.”

Brooke interned for CBRE, a national commercial real estate firm in Los Angeles, for two summers while in college. Demonstrating her drive and commitment to exceed in the field, she was offered a full-time position after graduating college. Brooke now works as an Associate on a highly successful team, called the Southern California Health Care Services Group. As a leader of this group, Brooke works with doctors, hospitals, and owners of medical office buildings in Southern California, helping them with their diverse real estate needs. She believes that her internship during college, especially during these tough economic times, allowed her to find “an avenue for success.” The confidence she has, that began in her formative years at IRDS (then Heschel West), urged her to carve out a key position on the real estate team, manage and run the team with great efficiency, and recruit people with similar levels of enthusiasm and skills.

Being a leader is important to Brooke. With her strong sense of confidence and her vision to make her team at CBRE the best it can be, she most desires to be effective for her clients. She loves her job and advises, “Do whatever you love and be confident in yourself and your abilities to get a leg up on the competition.” As she remembers her years at IRDS (then Heschel West) giving her the support that led her to be where she is today, she warmly concludes, “It’s the *feeling* of community, family, tradition, and being loved by teachers, friends, and parents’ friends in a loving, supporting place.... That’s what makes the school so special.” Good luck Brooke. We are so proud of you!