

Craig Dezern, B.A. English, 1986

By Lyndsey Pender and Collin Massie

Vice President of Brand Communications, Hilton Hotels and Resorts



Craig Dezern (1986) has embodied, to the utmost degree, the Western Kentucky University mission to produce American leaders who have an international reach.

The skills first learned in the classrooms of Cherry Hall continue to enrich Dezern's professional endeavors, from the Vice President of Global Relations at [Walt Disney Parks and Resorts](#) and to the Vice President of Brand Communications at [Hilton Hotels and Resorts](#). His current job entails "leading global communications across Hilton's 14 industry-leading brands." His team is primarily focused on reaching international consumer audiences with brand story-telling.

Although he has now worked at two major companies, Disney and Hilton, Dezern started his journey here on the Hill. This was a pivotal period in his life because the mastery of the English language, acquired at WKU, greatly contributed to his professional career development. "My dual majors of journalism and English," he said, "have provided me with a strong skill set in communication." Since graduating from WKU, Dezern's educational foundation in the humanities has led to great success.

In 1991, he was accepted and enrolled at Yale Law School, where he received his Master of Studies in Law degree. Dezern wrote as a reporter and eventual editor at the [Orlando Sentinel](#), where he was an award-winning journalist. Reporting provided the opportunity to write daily and to hone his craft. After nearly a decade at the *Sentinel*, he began his 20-year career working for Disney Parks and Resorts, rising in rank from Managing Editor to Director of Media Relations to Vice President of Global Relations.

Dezern encourages those wishing to pursue an English degree to do the following things: “Read as broadly as possible and challenge yourself to write, write, write!”

