

Scholarships help sisters kick-start career dreams

Foundation helps one launch career, the other pursue architecture degree

By Andrea Russell for ATSSA



Siblings, from left, Katie, Cameron and Christopher Hutt gather for a photo at Cameron's commencement at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville in 2022. She is now a physician recruiter in St. Louis, Mo.

At age 23, Cameron Hutt is thriving. She lives in St. Louis, Mo., where she began a career as a physician recruiter for Jackson Physician Search directly after graduation from the University of Tennessee in 2022. During lunch breaks, she works out, and in her free time, she loves to cook and watch football with her boyfriend Logan and their puppy, Peach. Cameron credits the American Traffic Safety Services (ATSS) Foundation with helping her launch a fulfilling career.

"My work is very rewarding," she said. "I work with a lot of clients ... in extremely underserved areas and I'm able to find health care providers for communities that really need it."

The Foundation also has made a huge difference in the life of her sister, Katie Hutt, a University of Tennessee student who is finishing her third year as an architecture student.

The Hutt family has even more to celebrate ahead, as the sisters said their brother is also considering attending UT in the fall.

But it's been a long road.

On April 18, 2006, United Rentals worker Chris Hutt was killed after a motorist struck him as he was installing speed limit signs in a work zone on Interstate 465 in Indianapolis. He died from his injuries later that day. Chris Hutt, a former high school football standout, was 33.

Cameron was a kindergartner when her father died, and Katie was 3. Their mother, Kristin, was five months pregnant when Chris Hutt died and named their son, Christopher, after him.

"Not only did [his death] guide my whole life path, it shaped me as a person," Cameron said recently. "I really had to step up and be there for my siblings and my

mom. Obviously, it challenged my mother in ways people never want to experience. I can look back now and wonder how she managed with three little kids after losing her husband. It shows a strength you never knew you had."

In 2008, the family moved from Indianapolis to Cleveland, Tenn., to be closer to Kristin Hutt's parents. The Hutt children attended school there, and their family bond remained strong.

"A lot of my mom's conversations with me and my siblings are about mental health and how it impacts daily life," said Katie, 20. "I watched my sister grow up dealing with these struggles but also succeeding at the same time. She was everything I wanted to be."

Cameron, the first in her extended family to complete college, said she never felt any pressure to set an example for her brother and sister. Higher education had always been her plan, and her siblings have paved their own paths, she said.

"My siblings are so smart," she said. "They are little geniuses. I know they are going to outperform me. Whatever they do, they'll be fantastic at it."

ACHIEVING DREAMS

Cameron was a senior in high school when she found out about the ATSS Foundation's Roadway Worker Memorial Scholarship program from ATSSA Board member Tim McNelis. He was her dad's boss at United Rentals and is now the operations manager at Indiana Sign & Barricade.

"I didn't realize how many people had been impacted by loss

of life [in work zones]," Cameron said. "I was surprised that this affects more people than I ever thought and that there was a program promoting safety and helping people like us."

The Foundation's competitive scholarship program offers up to \$10,000 annually for dependents of roadway workers killed or permanently disabled in work zone incidents. Students who demonstrate a strong commitment to volunteerism are eligible to apply for an additional \$1,000, given in honor of Chuck Bailey, a roadway safety member who died in 2002.

Cameron received the scholarship each year of her college career, as has Katie.

Cameron, a communications major, said the Foundation helped make her time at the University of Tennessee "the best four years" of her life.

"[The scholarships] took so much stress off my shoulders. Obviously, it's not cheap to go to school," Cameron said. "Having assistance ... made everything so much more attainable."

Katie agreed.

"The Foundation has just really made it possible to achieve my dreams and be where I want to be without having that financial burden," she said.

The Foundation's assistance also allowed Cameron to better prepare for the professional arena, she said.

"I think the ability to focus on my studies and do internships in the summer ... really gave me the upper hand coming into the workforce," Cameron said.

During Cameron's first year of college, the Hutt family was invited to ATSSA's Annual Convention & Traffic Expo in Tampa, Fla.

The event gave Cameron and her family a chance to meet donors and others associated with the roadway safety infrastructure industry.

"It was a good family experience," Cameron said. "And my mom was able to see all the technology that my dad would talk about all the time."

"I got to know people in the program, and I knew from that point that eventually I would be applying for and hopefully getting the scholarship, which eventually ended up happening," Katie said.

When Katie learned she had been awarded a scholarship, she was relieved.

"My program is five years, so I'm going to need as much help as I can get," she said. "There was a sense of relief and excitement, following in my sister's footsteps."

Katie's interests in art, math and history led her to the university's architecture program.

"I love it so much," Katie said of the school. "There's not another place I'd rather be. I truly feel like this is where I'm meant to be."

When she's not in class, studying or working part-time at Whole Foods, Katie plays video games, works with architecture software and hangs out with her cat, Bubba. She's also a member of Alpha Rho Chi, a professional and social co-ed fraternity for architecture students.

Katie hopes to study abroad, either in Poland or Japan.

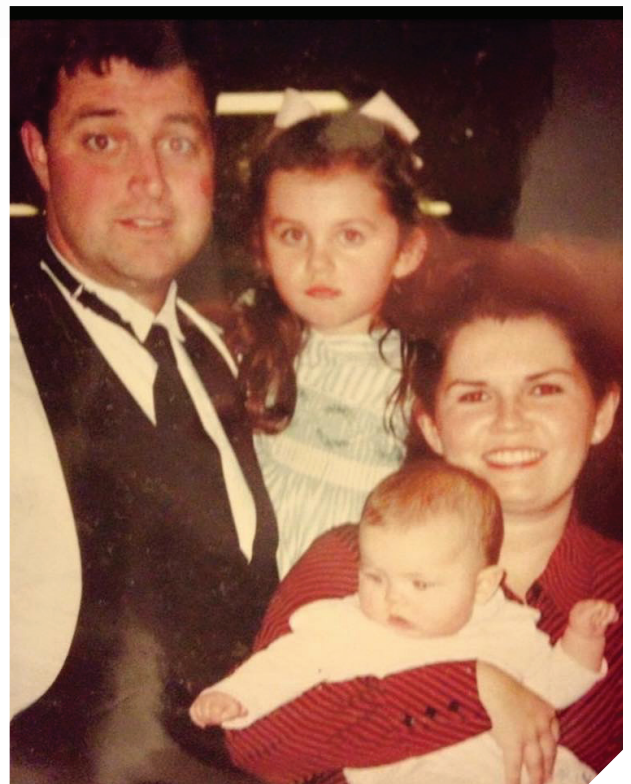
"I want to go around the world and see different types of architecture," she said.

CARRYING ON A LEGACY

Today, family and friends keep Chris Hutt's memory alive.

"We always tell stories about him," Cameron said. "It always becomes a point of conversation at family functions."

Every year in Indianapolis, the family helps host the Chris Hutt Memorial Golf Outing, an event honoring him and highlighting roadway safety.



▲ Chris Hutt and his wife, Kristin, pose for a family photo with daughters Cameron and Katie in November 2003.

"It's great to reflect on his life and there's always a new story about who he was as a person," Katie said. "I'm glad he had people who loved and cared about him enough to carry on his legacy and let his children know how great of a guy he was. I'm grateful to have such a community around in Indiana that supports roadway safety."

The ATSS Foundation has also offered a sense of community over the years, the sisters said.

"We are so thankful for the existence of [the Foundation] and our ability to be involved with it. I truly had no idea how many people were in the same situation as my family," Cameron said. "Just being able to be in touch with the community has had such an impact. I can't express how grateful I am. //"

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