

Viola Cipriani – business administration (MBA)

Why did you choose your degree program? How has it helped you grow personally and professionally?

I chose the MBA program because I thrilled at the idea of being able to get an MBA in as quick as one year. Most schools do not offer the option of taking a master's degree that is condensed to be completed in 12 months, and McKendree gives you this opportunity while still offering challenging courses. Thanks to this MBA program, I was able to deepen my understanding and skills in business administration and get a second degree while also enjoying my last year of NCAA eligibility in the tennis team.

What activities are you involved in at McKendree?

I am the captain of the women's tennis team. I also work as cashier and barista in the 1828 café.

What are you most proud of accomplishing during your time here?

I am very proud of all my academic and athletic achievements at McKendree. I graduated with a BBA in marketing and sport management in three and a half years and completed an MBA in one year. I won the Top Student of the School of Business award in 2023 and the Top Student of the MBA program in 2024. I also graduated summa cum laude. I am proud to say that I exceeded academically while pursuing my athletic commitments as a tennis player, which takes up to almost 30 hours a week between practice, gym, and matches.

If you could go back in time, what advice would you give your first-year self?

If I could go back in time, I would tell myself not to worry because the future has so many special things to hold! Also, everything happens for a reason, so trust the journey and enjoy the ride!

Who helped you the most on your journey?

My family back in Italy supported me the most in every way possible when I made the decision to move to the United States. They are my #1 fans and are always proud of all my achievements. All my McKendree teammates, friends, and coworkers should also be mentioned because every single person I've met in these 4 years have been meaningful to my journey.

What's next after graduation?

I am going to Northern Illinois University to pursue a Master of Science in Sport Management degree while working as the men's tennis assistant coach.