

Featured Alumna: Gira DESAI Wieczorek, Class of 2005



Gira DESAI Wieczorek '05 didn't set out to raise over \$2B for her clients when she co-founded [Aleberry](#) in 2009. The Duchesne lifer was completing her degree in advertising at the University of Texas at Arlington, just months after the 2008 market crash. She and co-founder William Bradley knew they didn't want to launch their careers in a corporate environment. "We were young and hungry," Gira reflects. "We wanted to get our hands dirty...not go on coffee runs."

Aleberry, which started as a purely creative agency, now occupies a niche in the market as both a design and investor relations agency. Their clients are primarily high-tech companies seeking venture capital funding. Aleberry's role is to make them look good from a design standpoint, plus coach them on what makes sense to potential investors.

"The evolution to fundraising was a gradual process, with a notable shift occurring around 2012," when Aleberry was involved with a prominent tech accelerator in Houston. As the design agency for a cohort of tech startups, Aleberry's founders engaged in numerous investor meetings on behalf of their design clients. They began to identify patterns of what would and would not make a company successful.

This, in turn, became what made Aleberry successful: companies for whom Aleberry was providing design services began asking for Aleberry's advice in other areas. Based on their recommendations, the companies secured funding—and a lot of it. "We built a natural expertise," and eventually Aleberry decided to take their firsthand knowledge in-house.

Though she characterizes the pivot to fundraising as somewhat "accidental," and starting her own company as a product of being young and fearless, Gira, now CEO, traces that

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fearlessness back to her Sacred Heart roots. “I always knew I could rely on my intellect to get a job. It was important to me to work with companies that were impactful, and that I believe in.” Gira encourages others to do the same: “look at paths that are not typical, and also: take risks when you’re young.”

Outside of tech, Aleberry does pro-bono design work for [Rescue Pets Movement](#), a Houston-based non-profit that facilitates out-of-state adoptions for dogs on shelter kill lists. It’s a big part of Aleberry’s identity, and aside from being “massive dog people,” Gira says “the desire to do something good, to take action, definitely comes from Duchesne.”

Recently, Gira, her husband, their dog, and 1 year old daughter relocated to Newton, MA, from Seattle, WA. The couple plan to send their daughter to Newton Country Day School of the Sacred Heart. “I was really lucky to start at Duchesne at an early age. I think it gave me a great foundation for independence, confidence, and building strong relationships that I still have to this day. The values that my husband and I have really align with the goals, especially intellectual development and social impact.

I want our daughter to feel like nothing is impossible for women and have that sense of community that I continue to have. I also want her to be independent and confident, something I think Sacred Heart instills. We all work hard, are independent, and have love for each other that has lasted decades, and are confident in our beliefs.”