

## **INTERVIEW WITH KARISA FOREMAN**

### **How was your Graduation ceremony?**

It was pretty long, but overall a very nice ceremony.

### **Has it hit you that you're done with school?**

Yes, I think so far it has, because I don't have any homework and stuff to do. I just go home and relax!

### **Is that scary and if yes, why?**

Yeah, it's a little bit scary because I've been doing this for so long. Going to school is all I really know, so I'm interested in getting into the work force and breaking that habit. I'll be going back to Graduate school, but not right now, because I want the experience of working first.

### **Do you think it's crucial to gain experience on the job first before going to graduate school?**

I don't think that there's a set path that anyone has to take. For some, it's better to just keep going straight through, so they know they won't have to go back to school. For others, they probably need the break and the experience of working first before returning to school. It's basically a question of preference.

### **What was it like being an Honors student and working with the Honors College office?**

It was interesting to experience both sides. I don't think the job had any impact on my responsibilities as a student and vice versa.

As regards my working relationship with the staff of the Honors College, I've had interactions with Jan Pinkston in the past, because she was my first year seminar professor; but I'm new to Dr. Barbara Andrew to an extent. They're both my bosses, but I definitely have a good relationship with them now and it's great to know that they care.

### **What advice do you have for incoming students in terms of making their journey easier, bearing in mind that you have the privilege of hindsight?**

I would have taken the time to set and examine my goals and done everything step by step and that's because I put a lot of pressure on myself during the first couple of semesters. As an Honors student, there are high expectations, but if you miss your mark, it's okay, keep pushing

through. You definitely want to start off strong as an Honors student, but don't put too much pressure on yourself. You'll be okay, it's just the beginning and you'll have time to get back on track.

**What influenced this outlook of yours, in terms of not putting too much pressure on yourself?**

In my junior year, I had a misstep, and I was really hard on myself. There was a loss in my family and I was extra hard on myself for not doing so well in school. Everyone around me was telling me it was okay and that I would be fine. I needed to know that for myself, but at that time, I didn't.

Now I can definitely look back and say, 'good going Karisa, you made it through', but at that time I put a lot of pressure on myself. I'd like the incoming Honors students to know they should not put so much pressure on themselves. Of course everyone wants to do well, but it's okay to breathe and enjoy the journey while you're at it.

**Talk about the process of writing your thesis. What was that like for you?**

Talking to your supervisor and having a plan is crucial! You need to have a plan of what needs to get done in what month and what week. That helps a lot!

**How much time would you say is sufficient to put together one's thesis to ease the pressure?**

I would say give yourself two or three semesters. I got a little bit done here and there. I actually started my thesis at the end of my junior year, so there wasn't too much pressure on me. I was done with my thesis in January 2017 and had nothing to worry about! I basically enjoyed my final semester with no pressure.

I think it's also important to look at previous students' topics and what they have done and speak to their advisors. In my opinion, once you have an idea and you're excited about it, you might actually want to start working on it and that drives you.

**If you had an Honors College student starter pack, what would you put in it?**

Perseverance, determination, my William Paterson University email, friends (within and outside of the Honors College) and time management!

**Speaking of time management, how did you manage your time as an Honors Student?**

I was addicted to my planner. Whatever I had to do, I'd write it down daily!

**What resource do you think is the most underutilized by students of the Honors College?**

I think it's the 'lunch in the lounge' events. When we all started as freshmen and sophomores, we were always in attendance. But as time went on, we more or less forgot about it.

Apart from the interaction and relaxation that comes with the 'lunch in the lounge', those sessions are informative for freshmen and sophomores, especially when it comes to their tracks and study abroad programs. I think the event is very communal in nature and it helps keep the Honors students together. It's also a platform which helps the younger ones to see where the seniors are and have a vision of where they will be in a couple of semesters.

**What would you say is your most memorable experience as an Honors College student?**

I would say the North-east regional conference, because I got a chance to interact with other Honors students outside of William Paterson University. Only thirteen of us attended the event, but, we had fun and got to show off the work that we put our hearts and souls into!

**Where do you see yourself at the end of 2017?**

I see myself getting a job! I don't really care about what the job is, but I want one! (*laughs*). I still have to figure out my career path, but as long as I can get my foot in the door, I'm looking to work my way up to the top!

**Where do you see yourself in ten years?**

Sadly, it's kind of a blur, but hopefully by then, I would have completed my Master's and probably be looking into some PhD programs. It would be nice to be called Dr. Foreman!

**Do you think you'll be back at the Honors College some day?**

I would love to be back in some capacity and maybe someday, if I have enough money, I could give a couple of scholarships.

**How do you think the Honors Graduates can keep the communication door open with the college?**

I think we all need to make an effort to stay in touch. We need to make it a mission to check up on each other and the faculty even if it's just one email per month.