
We are very lucky as a program to have some of our Alumni working at the University of La Crosse. Some of us may have them as their supervisors, office colleagues, and mentors. Alumni can provide advice, lessons, and stories that are similar and relate. Let's hear from some of our own Alumni!

Collin Burns-Gilbert

What are some of your previous experiences that lead to the position you hold today?
University of Minnesota-Twin Cities: Sport Management
UW-La Crosse: Master's in SAA Program
Athletics Internships with U of M, UW-La Crosse, & Hamline University
Resident Director for Madeline Island Music Camp (1 Summer)

Please share some lessons learned while working in Student Affairs.
1) Don't be an expert. It's okay (and encouraged) to not know it all. Continue learning from colleagues, friends, and your students. Regardless of the topic, there's always more to explore and consider.
2) Be genuine. Try to carry yourself, your actions, and your perspectives as consistently as possible. Students and Colleagues notice when it doesn't align.
3) Avoid drama. It's easy to get swept up in things you can't control. You can't control other peoples' thoughts or actions. However, don't confuse this with not advocating for your students or yourself.

Do you have any words of advice for the Job Search?
1) Don't take the rejection personally. It will be there and you'll still have to focus on your current role and responsibilities. The right fit will come along when it's supposed to. It could be the 1st position or it could be the 50th. Be patient.
2) Tailor your materials and be genuine. If you apply just to apply, people will notice. Don't do template cover letters or resumes. Make it your own and include what about that position/institution/location etc excites you and how you can and will contribute.
3) Practice interviewing. It's hard and draining. Practice with multiple people with different lenses that you know will give you honest constructive criticism.
4) Save money. Depending on your search, travel for interviews can build up very fast if institutions aren't providing any reimbursement.

What is your favorite memory that you had during your time as a graduate student?
Early on in the program (either September or October), almost all of us got together for a night of dinner and games. It was great because we had some extremely deep conversations, allowed people to share some of their personal stories that had brought them to the UW-L SAA program, helped prepare and indulge in some delicious food, and had a TON of fun.

It really helped set the foundation for the close relationships that formed throughout the rest of our time together. It also really helped us work better together in and out of the classroom/professional setting. It was definitely a turning point for us as we very quickly and easily got over the awkward "we don't know anyone here, yet we will be competing for jobs and grades" mentality that sometimes creeps in. (Hint: don't let that mentality impact your cohort relationships!)
**Matt Evenson**

What are some of your previous experiences that lead to the position you hold today?
I have the mentality that everything I did in my undergraduate and graduate education led me to the position I have today. I spent my time in grad school getting as many experiences as I could. I was fortunate enough to spend some time in Career Services, Academic Advising, Campus Climate and get a feel for what it was like to work at both a public and private institution. I use all of the skills I developed in graduate school, and my undergraduate degree in Business Management with an emphasis in Human Resources in my position today.

Please share some lessons learned while working in Student Affairs.
You have 2 years in the SAA program...use it wisely! If you have an interest in a specific area, connect with someone who works there and get a practicum or internship experience! Heck, if you have to volunteer for a program, do that. While you have some amazing people for classroom instruction, it was in the work opportunities that I really developed my skills. Branch out, make connections, and optimize your time. It is much more difficult to dabble in other areas of student affairs after grad school...so do it now! On a personal (and I guess professional) level...be a lifelong learner. Don't be afraid to not know an answer. It will happen, and it will happen often. Admit it and learn. Learn from students...wow, I know for a fact I've learned more from our amazing students then anywhere else. They are amazing people. Dare to be vulnerable with them and you won't regret it!

Do you have any words of advice for the Job Search?
Be patient. I am the worst to give that advice because generally I'm not that way. You have to be patient. While there are ways to set yourself up for a successful job search, there is still some luck involved. USE THE RESOURCES AROUND YOU! You have a lot of people who want to see you get a job and succeed. Lean on them for resume, cover letter, and interview help!!!! I cannot stress that enough. Lean on people, work hard, and be patient and good things will happen.

What is your favorite memory that you had during your time as a graduate student?
It's always the people for me. Students I got to know and still stay in touch with, fellow grad students who I now see at conferences and are colleagues, and staff members at UW-L and beyond that still check in with me. They tell you it's a tight knit profession...and they are right! Be kind, be generous with your time, invest in the people who are around you.

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**Jennie Hartzheim**

What are some of your previous experiences that lead to the position you hold today?
Assistant Director of Student Activities for Greek Life & Leadership - Beloit College
Director of Student Activities - Beloit College
The wide variety of experiences I had with practice and internships while in the graduate program (alumni services, residence life, affirmative action & diversity, University Centers - CAB).

Please share some lessons learned while working in Student Affairs.
The importance of building, growing & maintaining relationships. Taking the time to really get to know a student your working with or a colleague can make all of the difference in the World in regards to your ability to effectively work together. Relationships are what give meaning to our work.
The other lesson/motto that always seems to find its way into my life and career is, a person's perception= their reality.

Do you have any words of advice for the Job Search?
Be PATIENT. I know, that is easy to say and hard to do! The right job & experience will come along for you, it may not be at all what you were originally looking for or even would have pursued, but life has a way of providing the right opportunities when you need them, you just need to let yourself be open to them!

What is your favorite memory that you had during your time as a graduate student?
I have so many great memories of my time as a grad student. My favorite memory revolves around our daily lunch breaks in Cartwright. As a UC grad we at lunch together, along with a good portion of the full time UC staff on a daily basis. It was a really great way to connect with and learn from each other! Actually, there were a good number of GAs from other campus areas that would join us.
What are some of your previous experiences that lead to the position you hold today?
I had plenty of interactions and life experiences with many types of people at all levels of authority in different geographical areas in the US and world. I also lived through many life threatening and the death situations of others. I had a solid practical education of city street life, the suburban lifestyle, and other communities of living life. Really going to the Boy's Club located in the Black community of Milwaukee almost everyday really role-modeled for me how an organization of mentors can truly support the development of young individuals. Working in a surgical unit at a major hospital as an anesthesia and monitor technician taught me how to prioritize, anticipate thoughts and actions of others, to plan ahead, and to work with and learn from the knowledgeable individuals around me. These all helped me to become a good supervisor and advisor.

Please share some lessons learned while working in Student Affairs.
Most important, I learned that students are the focus and should be the number one priority. Always be prepared for the unexpected. The most successful are those that can and are willing to work well within structure/routine as well as informal on the spot situations. I have grown to be naturally calm in almost all encounters and situations.

Do you have any words of advice for the Job Search?
Don't just go for any job anywhere. Think about where you really want to be for what reasons. Also go for a particular position at a specific location because you think your skills and talents prefer a specific kind of work/duties. Go for something you truly like instead of simply looking at the money aspect in a position that might be undesirable to you.
Seek working with a leadership team that is constantly open to improvement, creativity, and positive change.
In writing cover letters, the content should be written to describe how you and your skill set will meet the needs/tasks of the job announcement.

What is your favorite memory that you had during your time as a graduate student?
Spending time outside the classroom with other graduate students going through the College Student Personnel Program together.

Summer Internship Placements!
We are excited to announce that many of our first year students have internships at different colleges and university's this summer.

Alyssa Gostoncik will be working at the University of West Florida as the Family Orientation Intern through NODA.
Megan Lindbeck will be working for UW-L NSO this summer with the Eagle Guide Program.
Katie Van Wyk will be working at the University of Utah through NODA.
Anna Turrif will be working in the Student Life Office at UW- Green Bay.
Noelle Ponasik will be working at the International Office at Frankfurt University in Frankfurt, Germany.
Bailey Steckbauer will be working in Residence Life at Salem State University through ACUHO-I.
Whitney Hedge will be working as the First Experience Intern at University of California Santa Cruz.
Shout Outs

Graduating second years and to the first year's for being half way there!
SAA Org for planning an end of year get-together!
Professors for another intellectually stimulating semester
Kelsey Kopp for brilliantly connecting the dots between our JAMs/ARPs!
First year cohort for almost being done with their first year of grad school!
Angela Birrittella for being an amazing person in so many ways.
Kim for being amazing lunch buddy and sharing her swipes!
Kayla for being an amazing person and SAA Buddy!
Tom for always being willing to help!
Nick, Steph, and Megan for a great Assessment Team presentation!
Shaundel for making group meetings entertaining!
Jackie for being a great mentor and friend!
Nick for always being honest and offering thoughtful input to conversations!
Megan for taking charge of the Serogy Candy Bars!
SAA Org for all the work they have done this year!

Bitesize History for May

From Noelle Ponasik, Curator of History

The Student Movement

United States history during the 1960s and 1970s was wrought with turmoil and civil unrest due to government involvement abroad, most notably in Vietnam. Higher education institutions became forums for political activism, known historically as The Student Movement. Civil rights demonstrations and anti-war protests were prevalent on campuses across the nation as a generation gap grew between old ideologies and traditional values were challenged. Violence sometimes followed these demonstrations. Perhaps the most memorable event during The Student Movement era was the Kent State shooting on May 4, 1970.

At Kent State University, in Kent, Ohio, four students were killed by the National Guard, who opened fire on a crowd protesting President Richard Nixon’s decision to invade Cambodia. The shootings set off tumultuous campus demonstrations across the United States resulting in the temporary closing of Kent State and numerous other institutions across the nation. The Kent State shootings and protests of The Student Movement era forever changed student activism and offers an insight into the intersections of politics, culture, and higher education.