



Eya Haddouche, Class of 2017

CB: *What do you miss the most about attending Caldwell University?*

EH: I miss so much about my CU experience. But most of all, I miss my friends, hanging out in the Writing Center, poking into the English Department suite to say hello, and being in so many memorable classes that I wish I could take again: Coming of Age Literature, Modern Drama, and Contemporary Fiction, to name a few!

CB: *What skills that you gained as an English major at Caldwell have you been able to apply in your career?*

EH: Starting in freshman year, one of the things I knew I had to become better at was writing, especially if I wanted to be a successful English major. I learned that my pursuit towards being a better writer taught me so many other skills at the same time. Little by little, essay after essay, I learned to develop my ideas with better clarity and most importantly, I learned how to communicate those ideas. It's one thing to have ideas for writing an essay, and it's a whole other thing to sit down and put those ideas onto paper in a way that is strong and makes sense to another person reading it. That meant taking the initiative to visit Dr. Verrone, my advisor, often. I improved as a result of her constructive feedback. Then, fast forward to senior year, when I thought I had enough experience under my belt to write a cohesive 10 page

essay in 3 hours: comps. I was really challenged when it came time to prepare for the daunting comps exam. I was in and out of Dr Lindroth's office (she was my comps advisor) every day for several weeks until the very day before the exam brainstorming ideas, writing and rewriting, strengthening certain language here and there, and so on. I passed that exam with distinction. Though I wouldn't say my writing is perfect now, the skills I learned in that experience became valuable to me because I need them today. Sometimes it's for doing simple things like writing emails (which can be challenging depending on who it's for) or making a flier. When I was applying to graduate school, I had to write an essay for my application which was an opportunity to really detail my goals for Admissions that a resume might not be able to cover entirely. And finally, I'm constantly initiating business relationships, whether it's with coworkers, customers, or investors, so learning to communicate clearly and effectively was important as well.

CB: *What is your current position/what are your responsibilities in this position?*

EH: At the moment, I am an Executive Assistant at a real estate office. My focus is in various administrative tasks like making phone calls, scheduling appointments, responding to emails, keeping company files organized, and bookkeeping.

CB: *What (if any) works are you currently reading?*

EH: Currently, I am reading a novel recommended to me by Mary Ladany called "Go, Went, Gone" by Jenny Erpenbeck.

CB: *After graduating from Caldwell, did you consider attending graduate school? If you are attending graduate school, which school do you attend and what is your coursework like?*

EH: This spring, I'm attending my first semester in Montclair State's Theatre Studies M.A program. I'm anticipating heavy reading and writing in my theatre and theory class. Before the semester even started I had homework which was to prepare to discuss the contents of a dense 40-page introduction to theatre theorists through time. Later in the semester, I have to work on a lengthy research paper. But the work isn't all just reading and writing. For instance, in the second week, we played theatre games and analyzed them in-depth, and so far I've attended a Forum Theatre panel and Forum Theatre presentation. With all of this happening, we're encouraged

to work together so I expect to be involved in a lot of collaborative work, too.

CB: *What was the interview process like for you while searching for a job after graduation?*

EH: The job search has its ups and downs. After my post-graduate break, I applied to a job and didn't get a response. Later, I applied to a job for a librarian's assistant position at a library in a neighboring town and got it. I was more nervous for my interview than I should have been because it turned out to be conversational and casual. Aside from job interviews, when I was applying to Montclair State, I had to undergo an interview process before getting accepted. I was very nervous for that interview, but it turned out just fine. My interviewer was really interested that I had done so much writing and emphasized the importance of being a good writer in order to succeed in the program. I would say that 90 percent of my resume and application essay was related to work I had done as an English major during my undergrad and I believe it is exactly what I needed to get in, so I recommend students do as much as they can as undergrads.

CB: *What advice do you have for current Caldwell English majors/minors in regards to attending school and finding a career after graduation?*

EH: BE ACTIVE! Participate in any and EVERY English department event that you can. You can put all of those activities on your resume and it will show that you're able to not only be a good reader and writer but also apply those skills practically in different settings. For example, I worked as a tutor for about three years in the Writing Center, helping students with a wide range of needs whether it was just coming up with essay ideas or more in-depth paragraph dissection. You could also become part of the Calyx Literary Magazine! That's a great way to get your art, photography, and writing published. Plus, working with Mary Ladany, whose office is in the Writing Center, is super fun. In addition, if the department is having events like the Undergraduate Literature Conference, or my personal favorite, the annual Gathering, or if you want to participate in representing the department at an open house, for instance, do it! As long as you express your interests, there will almost always be a place for you. It's how I realized that I wanted to use English to pursue theatre. I took a drama class with Dr. Lindroth and loved

it, so I seized every opportunity I could to perform, present, or do readings. At the same time, being involved so often strengthened my relationship with the department which is one of the best things I feel an English major should do.

CB: Have you been successful in publishing any original work? If you were to be published, what type of genre would you choose to write in?

EH: Yes. I wrote a review of Arthur Miller's *A View from the Bridge* for Dr. Lindroth's Modern Drama class which I submitted later for publication in the Fall 2017 edition of the Arthur Miller Journal and it was accepted. I did enjoy reviewing the play, so I may want to write similar content in the future.

CB: Do you do any writing in your free time? If so, is there any short excerpt you would like to share with the Caldwell community? (from a poem, short story, etc.)

EH: I don't do much writing in my free time, but when I do, I love to journal.

CB: If you had chosen to double major at Caldwell with English, what other major would have piqued your interest?

EH: I double-majored in English and Sociology while I was at Caldwell. I chose Sociology because I wanted to learn more about how society works. I think that English and Sociology go well together because most stories are a reflection of their respective societies, after all. I found my favorite topics to be feminism, gender, and culture, which I liked making connections to in the novels we read.

CB: Do you have any plans or interests in perhaps teaching one day?

EH: I think I would really enjoy teaching Theatre or English at the university level in the future.

CB: Is there one professor or faculty member from Caldwell that especially inspired you? Why?

EH: Every English Department professor has inspired me in one way or another. I could walk into the suite on any day and have a conversation with them about anything, and they'd always be so supportive and eager to offer their advice and encouragement. I would say that Dr. Mary Lindroth deeply inspired in me the drive to pursue a career in theatre. She brings her energy and passion for knowledge to the classroom in a way that is her unique style and it's pretty contagious. I learned from her to appreciate so much about theatre and stopped by her office

plenty of times with my friends to talk about it. There's also Dr. Verrone, who inspired me to always keep English in my life because there is always something to be said about a novel, whether it be character or setting. She always chose the best books for her classes. And lastly, there is Mary Ladany. Looking back, I feel like I went through college with her at my side the whole way. We could talk to each other about anything, anytime, and anywhere, from ideas I had for a paper to important life events. She has become a very good friend of mine, and I'm inspired by her all the time.

CB: How do your plans for your future as a freshman English major compare with where you currently are in your career? What changed and why?

EH: I started out wanting to be a professor, then changed to my current interest in becoming a theatre director. I didn't know that Caldwell University had drama classes let alone a drama minor. I took one drama class and loved it, then took the others and found I could build it up to the minor. I love the academic side of being an English major and the creative side of the drama minor, so I decided that eventually I do still want to become a professor, but I want to become a director first. Another thing: I was very shy as a freshman. I had just come out of homeschooling and never imagined how involved I would become. I remember meeting my future best friends in Mary Ladany's office during my first Calyx meeting. I attended more events and eventually helped lead some events, too. Overall, I'm really thankful for the way that things turned out!

CB: Who is your favorite author, and what makes them so notable?

EH: My favorite author changes often. At the moment it's probably Meera Syal because I read "Anita and Me" in Coming of Age Literature with Dr. Verrone and loved it. A few months ago I picked up "Life isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee" and sped through it. I'm intrigued by the stories of sisterhood, motherhood, friendship, and love she tells through her female Indian protagonists. She also has a great sense of humor!