



Abigail Wortman, *Class of 2017*

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

AW: I miss the English Department the most! Even though I did not decide to add English as my major until my sophomore year, it completely impacted my college experience. The professors and my fellow English members all become friends that I could rely on and go to with all of my questions on my personal writing, assignments, comps etc. The department was so welcoming, and I miss walking into the department and just chatting with Alison, or asking Dr. Lindroth a Shakespeare question, or talking through a thesis with Dr. Verrone.

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

AW: I would say the two main skills I gained as an English major at Caldwell that I have been able to apply to my future career and current position are critical thinking and confidence. Every essay I wrote for the department, and every class discussion I took part in helped me hone my critical thinking skills. All of the professors challenged me to think deeper, and to think from all different perspectives. As a graduate student, those critical thinking skills help me every day in class and with school work. The English department also gave me so much confidence in both my decisions and my work. The professors really helped me learn how to trust my decisions in my writing and how to support my position.

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

AW: Right now I am currently in graduate school for speech-language pathology at Monmouth University. Apart from graduate school I work as a receptionist at a DJ company called Elite Entertainment, and as a cashier at a drug store named Steven Drugs. As a graduate student I am responsible for my school work, but also for my clients. Although I am only in my second semester I am already seeing my own personal clients, and I am responsible with coming up with goals and activities for each session. At my receptionist job I have normal secretarial responsibilities, but my boss has also recently given me the responsibility of reading through every email and blog post anyone in the office writes. I am in charge of proofreading and editing when needed.

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

AW: I am reading a few different things right now. Anyone who knows me knows that I am always rereading one of the Harry Potter books, but I am also reading *Milk and Honey* by Rupi Kaur and *Literary Witches*, which is a book focusing on the strong female authors throughout history.

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

AW: My advice to current English majors is to write, read, and talk to your professors. I know it is hard to find time to write and read for pleasure, but it is so important. It really helps you explore the world around you and your place in it. And talk to your professors! They are honestly so helpful. Each of them helped me through not only my classes, but decisions that helped shape my life after college. They also make great book recommendations.

CB: *Have you been successful in publishing any original work? If you were to be published, what genre would you be most interested in writing in?*

AW: I have been honored to have some of my original work published. I had a short story of mine published on Reader's Digest's website. I have also had some of my poetry and photography published in three of Caldwell's Calyx issues. I also have poetry that was set to be published in a book written by my dear late friend Sister Vivien. So far the majority of my published work has been poetry, and I would love to continue writing poetry, although I also love prose.

CB: *Do you do any writing in your free time? If so, is there a short excerpt that you would like to share with the Caldwell community?*

AW: I do not have a ton of time to write, however I do have an idea for a novel. I have actually written a rough draft of the Prologue, which I will attach below if you guys want to read it! Be warned though it is a rough draft and I have not shared it with anyone besides my siblings so far!

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

AW: I actually was a double major at Caldwell. I majored in both English and Psychology (although English was my favorite).

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

AW: I have had a few people mention teaching as a possible future for me. I am not sure however. I never envisioned myself a teacher, however I would not mind teaching an English class of some sort in the future. Perhaps a poetry writing class, or an English Literature class.

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

AW: Can I pick three? I would have to honestly say that three women equally inspired me in my time at Caldwell. The first was Dr. Verrone who convinced me to become an English major. I took one literature class with her and fell in love with English all over again. Her class discussions were amazing and she helped me to really delve deeper in my writing. Second I would have to say Dr. Mary Lindroth who introduced me to Shakespeare and the performing arts. I have to honestly say that I was not a Shakespeare fan going into Caldwell and I was dreading the required Shakespeare course. However, her Plays of Politics course completely changed my mind. I fell in love with Shakespeare and his tragedies. Macbeth has become one of my favorite plays of all time. She just had a way of explaining Shakespeare that really resonated with me. The third woman that really inspired me from my first day of Caldwell, and who continues to inspire me, is Mary Ladany. Mary was my first writing professor and has grown to be my close friend. Mary really helped me to explore my poetry and to think about my writing. She helped me explore the strength and true meaning of individual words. She also introduced me to my favorite poet, Emily Dickinson, who in turn has inspired some of my poetry. Each of these women have helped to inspire me in both my writing and my life.

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?*

AW: When I first started my English major I actually had plans to go into the ABA master's program at Caldwell. I ended up deciding on Speech-Language Pathology in the end, and I am very happy with my decision. The reason I chose speech-language pathology is actually because of the ASL classes I took at Caldwell. I wanted to work in a field where I could work with the deaf population and speech-language pathology offered me that opportunity.

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

AW: I honestly do not know how to choose just one. I look to Jane Austen, the Bronte sisters, Emily Dickinson, Anne Bradstreet and J.K. Rowling as my favorite authors and my inspiration. They write about such strong female characters that represent change, individuality, intelligence and strength. Their writing is engaging and fluid, and each of them has written a work that has spoken to me. I reread their works in times of stress, happiness and contentment. They inspire my personal work, as well as inspire remind me of my love for writing and literature.