

Mary Boothe, B.A. English Professional Writing, 2014

By Melissa Rush

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“Starting law school with a solid foundation from my English degree helped me be more competitive with all the new material I was learning because I was already so well versed in basic technical writing skills. I use the foundational skills I learned in undergrad every day, whether I am doing legal research and writing, or sending professional correspondence.”

Mary Boothe concluded her time at Western Kentucky University in 2014 after graduating *summa cum laude* with a B.A. in Professional Writing and a B.A. in Advertising Branding. Boothe was recognized for her work ethic and dedication to her education with numerous awards and scholarships including Outstanding Advertising Student (2014), Spirit Master Vice Chair (2014) Spirit Master Historian (2013), Outstanding Professional Writing Student (2013), Dr. Karen Pelz Scholarship (2013), Jefferson and Louise Caskey Scholarship (2013), World Topper Summer Abroad Scholarship (2011), and the SGA Study Abroad Scholarship (2009). It was the high standards set by Dr. Angela Jones in her classes that Boothe felt gave her the discipline to graduate with honors in both degrees and prepare for the competitiveness of law school.

Dr. Angela Jones shared several of Boothe’s accomplishments while at WKU.

“As a student at WKU, Mary found many opportunities to apply the skills she was learning in her majors and minor to organizations that were important to her. For example, for her Honors Capstone Experience/Thesis, she re-branded the campus Office of Sustainability. She also interned as a TA for English 299, Introduction to English Studies, to share her expertise with students new to the major. In 2013, Mary earned our award for Outstanding Student in Professional Writing award. In English 402, Editing and Publishing, Mary and her team completed a memorable project. She served as the primary designer for her team’s collaborative project, a seven-week assignment where a group of four students worked closely with an off-campus client, the Bowling Green-

Warren County Humane Society (BGWCHS) to redesign that organization's newsletter. Her team's project raised a record-setting amount of money for the BGWCHS. In a letter to me, Lorri Hare, BGWCHS's director, noted, 'We knew that this would be a great campaign, but we had no idea it would be so successful. Our 2012 newsletter has brought in \$21,765 to date!! Our highest previous total was \$15,488.'

Boothe graduated from law school in 2017. She is currently serving a one-year appointment as a clerk for the Monroe County Court of Common Pleas in Pennsylvania. A law clerk appointment is an honor given to assist lawyers that have recently passed the bar with their transition to a legal career. "On the surface level, a law clerk's workload largely consisting of research and writing projects, which are two tasks highly related to an English degree. Other than teaching English, being an author, or being unemployed, I would think the average person might think of an English major's destiny as one that involved reading and writing all day, which pretty well encapsulates the life of a law clerk."

It was a combination of several qualities that made WKU the perfect fit for Boothe. "I chose to attend WKU because when I walked on campus, it felt like home. I loved the beauty of the campus, the student culture, and the availability of opportunities for students. WKU was truly the best size for me to grow both personally and professionally." She took full advantage of many extracurricular opportunities on campus including being a Spirit Master and studying at Harlaxton in Grantham, England, for a semester. Boothe also joined Dr. Davies on a summer faculty-led trip to Switzerland. "I met some of my very best friends, all while having the amazing opportunity to travel around the world. I cannot emphasize enough how important it is to take advantage of WKU's study abroad programs."

Boothe offered advice to current students that could apply to any stage of life, not just time spent in college. "Your world is as big or as small as you make it. There are so many fantastic opportunities out there; don't get too caught up on the "right time" to achieve certain milestones."

