

Amanda Moore, B.A. English, 1997

By Lynne Finch

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Amanda Moore graduated from Western Kentucky University with a B.A. in English and government and a minor in environmental studies. Moore clerked for a federal appellate judge for a year after law school at Yale, and then practiced environmental law in eastern Kentucky for a few years. After her first child was born, she stopped practicing law and shifted to teaching as an adjunct, first in the government department at Morehead State University and then in the political science department at Middle Tennessee State University.

When practicing environmental law in eastern Kentucky, Moore worked at a nonprofit law office called the [Appalachian Citizen's Law Center](#), a free legal service to low-income people and communities on coal-related issues: black lung benefits, mine safety employment work, and environmental cases.

Now Moore is the director of online content & communities at the [Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law](#). The Shriver Center provides resources for legal aid attorneys and others who advocate for people living in poverty. She plans the content, finds the best attorneys to write about it, edits those articles, and then publishes and promotes them.

The world of lawyers revolves around written communication (analysis, argument, and composition), and now that Moore works in the legal publication world, those skills are even more essential. She stresses that her English degree was vital in shaping her reading comprehension, critical thinking, and technical writing skills. Her law degree and legal practice inform her writing and editing, but it's those skills learned in English classes that put the substance into a usable form.

Moore's advice to students is "don't be afraid of writing classes!" When she turned in a less-than-stellar first essay in her required writing class and received an appropriate

grade on it, she buckled down and really worked on sharpening her writing. It worked! “Don't limit yourself in thinking about the career path of an English major. The world runs on communication -- if you can do that clearly, the possibilities are endless.”

