

## Shayna Tyree, M.A. English, 2012

By Melissa J. Rush

### English Teacher, Hart County High School

*"I chose WKU because it was where I had always wanted to attend college. I love the campus, the programs, the professors, and pretty much everything about it (except maybe the parking)."*



Shayna Tyree graduated from Western Kentucky University *magna cum laude* in 2005 with her BA in English and Allied Arts. She went on to complete her MA in English in 2012 and received the Gladly Award for Outstanding Master's Student.

At the time of her graduation in 2005, Tyree was a first-generation college student in her family. "I felt an immense pride. I felt honored to have been taught by the English department at WKU, as each and every professor I had made me feel valued and appreciated. My college graduation day further cemented the fact that I was doing what I was supposed to do with my life."

Although Tyree recognizes there were moments when she was impatient to graduate and get on with life, she still misses her time in Cherry Hall. After completing her MA, she discovered a void in having others equally passionate about literature to talk with. Tyree always planned on being a teacher and found that her love of literature and writing made choosing a major in English to be a natural decision. She currently teaches senior English at Hart County High School.

Tyree named several of her professors as being important to her success, both in her undergraduate and graduate studies, including Dr. Endres, Dr. Davies, Dr. Berry, and Professor Epley. "However, if I had to pick one, I would say Dr. Sandra Hughes impacted me the most. Not only did Dr. Hughes nurture my love of Gothic literature, she emulated the type of teacher I strive to be for my students. Her passion for what she taught was contagious, and I will forever appreciate getting to know her, even if she did make me watch *Saw*. I left her class feeling like I had not just had a wonderful teacher, but I had a friend as well."

She offered wonderful guidance to current and future students by reminding them never to give up, even when college seems too stressful to manage. Tyree acknowledged that there are times the workload is heavy, but students should remember that the faculty are all there to help you succeed. “Although there are times when graduation seems so far away, it really isn’t. Perseverance and dedication will result in success, and it has been my experience (as well as several friends of mine), that a degree from WKU’s English department will help ensure your success.”

