



# Rachel Hoge, Class of 2014

*By Caroline Mason*

*“Never give up on a dream just because of the time it will take to accomplish it. The time will pass anyway.”*

- Earl Nightingale

Rachel Hoge **graduated from the WKU English Department in 2014** with a concentration in creative writing. Currently, she is participating in the **Arkansas Writers MFA Program in Conway, Arkansas**. She is all set to graduate in December and is excited to be looking for editorial possibilities in Nashville, TN.

Earlier this year, she started her own website that showcases some of the articles and more creative pieces she has written that were **featured in high profile journals and papers such as *The Washington Post, Self, and Bustle***. She has clearly had many successes, but she also noted that it would seem at times that rejections were piling up, but she did not let temporary discouragement prevent her from writing. “Writing is a vocation that requires a good amount of perseverance, whether you’re a freelance nonfiction writer or a novelist—you have to be persistent.”

When asked what she misses most about WKU, the faculty in the English Department is most definitely near the top of the list. Every professor meant something special to Rachel and greatly influenced her writing. She specifically mentioned Dr. Poole and Dr. Winkler whose classes opened her eyes to the concept of “language acquisition” and gave her the courage to write about a personal struggle of hers: stuttering.

Many of the articles she has had published are on this very topic. When she was young, she wrote to express herself in ways that speech prevented her. However, as she grew and became more knowledgeable about her speech impediment, she saw it as motivation that empowered her to use her platform of writing for good. She said that “the more awareness [she] can raise, the more society’s understanding of stuttering will grow.”

After graduating from WKU and moving to pursue her professional career, **Hoge has found self-motivation and willpower to be her most valuable assets.** Without the built-in deadlines and assignments of classes as an undergraduate, it’s essential to make and schedule time to be creative. At WKU, she had so much more freedom to write and study things without the greater responsibilities that jump-starting a career demands. She stands by her statement that “establishing goals and maintaining focus is so significant.” College is a tool that prepares students for the “what’s next.” For Hoge, that meant teaching her how to better organize her time and studies to remain productive in the business world after graduation.

In December, after she graduates with her MFA, Hoge is ready to explore all the many opportunities available to English majors. She enjoys freelancing and hopes to continue, but she is eager to find an editorial position in which she can apply her now honed skills. Alongside that, she is looking forward to revising her first book and finding an agent that’s the perfect fit to represent her writing style to the world.

Reflecting back on her college experience at WKU, she had a few pieces of advice that she would give to her 18-year-old self if given the chance, **“Absorb all the wisdom you can. Read more. Revise more. Embrace life and all its intricacies—particularly the profound and the challenging, because these are the moments you’ll return to write about, again and again.”**