

Interview:

How would you describe your area of study to your grandmother?

I describe my area of study to my grandparents and parents as investigating the effects of a particular treatment in restoring the cognitive abilities that follow a traumatic brain injury. The treatment that I am investigating is something that we readily use in our lives; the compound is present in green tea and fruits.

What is your primary motivation for persevering through graduate school?

My motivation in graduate school is doing my best and excelling so that I will be accepted into a PhD program after I have completed my Master's degree.

Do you think there is any value in social networking with other graduate students in non-related fields?

I believe that there is value in networking with graduate students in other fields. Through my research in traumatic brain injury, I have discovered that many fields are interdisciplinary, and through communication with experts in other fields, it can add to my knowledge base within my own field.

What is your favorite stress-reduction technique?

My favorite stress-reduction technique is usually getting as far away from the stressor as possible. When I've had a bad day, I like to exercise to clear my mind, I also enjoy golf.

What is the last book you read strictly for pleasure and how long ago was it?

I recently read *Eating Animals*, by Jonathon Safran Foer. I read that this past summer; he is one of my favorite authors and I was reluctant to read his latest work, but I am really glad I did.

Please describe your most meaningful academic relationship.

I would say my most meaningful academic relationship would be with my thesis advisor, Dr. Mark Whiting. Before I came to Radford I had always been interested in studying traumatic brain injury and had completed my undergraduate thesis on the subject. When I came to Radford, I was thrilled to be given this opportunity. When I started work on my thesis with Dr. Whiting, I was even more excited that he was so willing to develop my skills as a researcher, and present me with opportunities to learn more about the field of traumatic brain injury.

What surprised you the most about graduate school?

I don't think much surprised me when I came here for graduate school. I knew that it was going to be a lot of work, but I also know that it will pay off for me in the long run.

If travel to Mars happens in your lifetime, would you want to be one of the scientists on board? If yes, what would you contribute to the mission?

I don't think I would want to travel to Mars, I don't believe I would have much to contribute to that trip.

What is your favorite comfort food and why? How often do you consume it?

My favorite comfort food would have to be sweets and chocolates. I probably have a piece of chocolate or a cookie once a day.

If you hadn't been admitted to graduate school, what do you think you would be doing right now?

If I hadn't been admitted to graduate school, I would probably be working in a research laboratory somewhere in Rochester NY trying to get my foot in the door into a Master's or PhD program. Graduate school was never an option, it was a must for me.

When do you expect to complete your degree?

I plan to complete my degree in the spring of 2011.