

Ashlie Donaldson Interview:

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

My area of study is preparing me to become the best elementary teacher possible, from introducing me to up to date technology that can be used within the classroom to showing me how to integrate various teaching methods so that all students are able to learn in a way that is best suitable for them. My program places students in a classroom to be guided by professors as well as the classroom teacher. The student's responsibilities within the classroom gradually increase with time—eventually a student will make all lesson plans for a class.

What is your primary motivation for persevering through graduate school?

I know that I have already put so much time and effort into school to become the best teacher I can be, so why quit now? Also, I have had a lot of people help me along the way so to give up now would not only hurt myself, but the people who have helped me get here. And of course knowing that one day I will be a role model to lots of young children, just as my teachers were role models to me.

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

Yes- I think that social networking is huge in today's society, especially among the younger generations. I think that it is an easy form of communication and whether two people are in the same field or not, I think that we can all learn from one another; perhaps I can learn something from someone else that I can apply in my classroom.

What is your favorite stress-reduction technique?

My favorite stress-reduction technique is to go running or to go shopping! I usually try to go running though so I don't go poor!

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

The last book I read was "Something Blue" by Emily Giffin and that was about 3 weeks ago when I was in San Diego for vacation.

Please describe your most meaningful academic relationship.

My most meaningful academic relationship was with Dr. Morrison, who was not only the supervisor of my graduate assistantship, but she was my professor as well. I felt that through work I became extremely comfortable with her and she helped me with any questions I had about the program. I also benefited in class since it was a discussion based course and I felt close enough with her to share my opinions. My graduate assistantship as a whole made me a lot closer to a lot of the staff, which I have found to be extremely beneficial to my academic career.

What surprised you the most about graduate school?

I was most surprised about the closeness of my graduate program, for instance all the teachers work very closely together to give the students the best education. Also, although graduate school is a lot of work, the staff and professors are willing to help in any way possible.

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?

Well, I would love to be on board but I am not the best at science. I think that the one thing that I could contribute is my positive attitude.

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

My favorite comfort food is Stouffer's macaroni and cheese, and I try not to eat it unless I'm really stressed out.

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

I think that I would still be working with children, probably full time substitute teaching until I got admitted into graduate school.

When do you expect to complete your degree?

August 2012