

Sophie Elliot Interview:

How would you describe your area of study to a novice?

Speech-language pathology is so much more than teaching people how to say sounds correctly! Although that does encompass one aspect, speech-language pathologists help people of all ages to communicate, whether that be speaking for the first time, re-teaching speech and language after a traumatic event, or using alternate means of communication. We do it all!

What is your primary motivation for persevering through graduate school?

I really want to get out and help change the lives of those I work with! For those who can't communicate, I ultimately want to enhance their quality of life and help them to communicate by working with them!

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

As a future SLP, it is crucial for us to network with other graduate students outside of our field! As we step out into the real world, we will find ourselves working with a variety of other professionals, whether it be in a medical setting with nurses, physical and occupational therapists or in a school system with educators, special educators, psychologists and administration. It is important for us to know what each of the other fields can bring to the table and for us to work as a multidisciplinary team to benefit our clients!

What is your favorite stress-reduction technique?

I really enjoy a good workout! Most days I get up at 5:30AM to start my day out on a positive note by exercising. Although I do enjoy a sweet treat occasionally to get me through a stressful day!

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

Whew! I think it was American Sniper or American Wife by Chris Kyle and Taya Kyle, respectively! I think that was back in December of 2014. Yikes!

Please describe your most meaningful academic relationship.

I have thoroughly enjoyed the relationships I've built with the supervisors of my clinical practicum throughout graduate school. In the fall, I was under the supervision of Mrs. Terri Shelor, in the spring, Ms. Patricia Rossi, and in the summer, Dr. Elizabeth Lanter. I have learned so much from each of these women about the field of speech-language pathology. They have all been great professional mentors and each of them really cared about making sure I'm successful in my academic and professional endeavors!

What surprised you the most about graduate school?

The thing that surprised me the most about graduate school is how quickly it has passed by! It seems like just last week I was learning the ropes of seeing my own clients, and now I am out at my off-campus practicum and just a few months away from graduation! I have learned SO much during this time and I'm so thankful that I have been so well prepared.

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?

Traveling to Mars would be such a neat opportunity! I think we still have a lot to learn about speech and language, and to be able to talk a look at that in extraterrestrial beings on another planet would be awesome! Although, I think getting on a spacecraft might be a little scary.

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

I really enjoy boneless chicken wings! We probably eat them once or twice a month to indulge!

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

I took a year off after receiving my Bachelor's degree at JMU prior to coming to RU, during which time I worked for a home health company in the nursing office. If I hadn't gotten into graduate school for speech, I probably would've considered becoming a nurse! I loved what I did during my year off and found nursing to be so intriguing and rewarding! I would have to get a stronger stomach, though!

When do you expect to complete your degree?

I will proudly walk across the stage in May of 2016 with my degree!