The 2017 Graduates are...

Resilient  Candid  Independent
Gregarious  Driven  Brave  Curious
Optimistic  Personable  Energetic
Early Bird  Achiever  Risk-taker
Carefree  Analytical  Disciplined
Motivated  Compassionate
Rayna Downing

Majors: Business Administration, Applied Critical Thought and Inquiry, and Psychology
First Destination Outcome: Behavior Specialist at Family First Center for Autism and Child Development. Most Recent Position: Customer Service Specialist for the City of Kansas City, Missouri.
Words to Describe You: Motivated. Compassionate. Analytical.

“*My Jewell education taught me to think critically in my everyday life. I’m comfortable with uncovering solutions that are “outside the box” or unconventional.*”
What inspired you in college?

I loved watching the successes of my peers and alumni. Some published papers while others embarked on international internships. My friends’ success stories motivated me to continue working hard and chase my dreams because we were all capable of accomplishing the impossible.

What do you admire most about Jewell?

I admire the faculty and staff. I worked with some of the greatest people in all of the offices around campus. They were willing to get to know me on a personal level. I was always greeted by a friendly face in every department. I was also able to develop close relationships with professors. Each of my instructors were concerned with my educational and personal life.
Zachary Stelzer
Major: Vocal Music and Secondary Education
First Destination Outcome: Vocal Music Instructor at Reed Academy in Springfield, MO

“Jewell has had a significant impact on my life. The mentors and friends that I met at Jewell have become a support group as I ride the challenges in my first-year of teaching.”
Describe your employment experience.

Working at Reed Academy has been an incredible learning experience, both as a first-year teacher and aspiring musician. This Middle School is considered to have one of the best choral programs in the state. Everyday is rewarding and challenging, but I know it’s exactly where I need to be to improve as an educator!

How has Jewell impacted you?

Through Jewell, I discovered myself and my abilities. The rigor of my classes taught me how to self-manage my workload and be proactive in the classroom. I admire Jewell’s ability to offer a challenging curriculum while still providing one-on-one instruction with its students. The small-campus feel is perfect for students who want room to grow socially and academically in a comfortable environment without feeling overwhelmed. At the same time, my involvement in choir continuously replenished my passion for music and singing!
Daniel Virga

Major: Oxbridge - Molecular Biology
First Destination Outcome: Ph.D. Candidate in the Department of Biological Sciences at Columbia University in the City of New York
Words to Describe You: Curious. Independent.

“It is because of my education at Jewell that I realized I wanted to pursue a Ph.D. in the biological sciences; it was essential in developing my affinity for neurobiology, and my research experience at Jewell helped foster my ability to become a better working scientist.”
What aspects of your Jewell experience prepared you most for life after college?

A combination of my exposure to cultures much different than my own when studying abroad, tutorial-based learning in the Oxbridge Program, and the constant focus on a bigger, broader picture has prepared me not only for my encounters in graduate school, but for my encounters here in one of the most diverse and complex cities in the world.

What do you admire most about Jewell?

I think I admire two things most: the people and the traditions. First, the people - which includes the professors, the staff, the other faculty, and the students - are what made my experience at Jewell. Second, the traditions. Experiencing Lighting of the Quad every year and growing closer and closer to the people every year that magical snow fell from Gano paints a really nice memory on which to look back.
“I always experienced that people at Jewell, no matter if they were students, faculty, staff, or even trustees, listened and were genuinely interested in what I had to say. This has helped me find confidence in what I do. Jewell helped me realize my own potential.”
What extra-curricular activities were you involved in during your time at Jewell?

For most of my college career, I was on the swim team, which is what initially brought me to Jewell. I was also a first-year RA for two years and later involved in Student Senate in a cabinet role, as well as President of the Political Science Honor Society. My most exciting role at Jewell was during my Junior year when I served on the Presidential Search Committee.

What do you admire most about Jewell?

I admire the sense of community and trust, which allows for space to disagree, but also listen and learn.
“My Jewell experience has impacted me by expanding my perspective of the world. Jewell has taught me to embrace those around you who have a different view, for I learned some new angles of the world from those differing views.”
What aspects of your Jewell experience prepared you most for life after college?

In addition to time management and networking skills, I have had many wonderful opportunities to connect with business and community leaders who have had a significant impact on my life. These leaders have taught me some intangibles, such as professionalism, persistence, and communication, which guide my mindset towards my occupation.

Share a favorite college memory.

I had the wonderful opportunity to play football for the William Jewell Cardinals. My favorite memory was my first time playing as middle linebacker. It was a warm September afternoon, and the game went back and forth until the last few drives. After a late score by the other team, the game came down to an onside kick that was recovered by Jewell. Then, our offense ran the ball twice to run the clock out on a 36-34 victory.
“I think my biggest inspiration came from my professors. The community and caring at Jewell inspired me to put my best foot forward.”
Share a favorite college memory.

I think my favorite college memory is all the times I spent on the track with my teammates. Doing sports at Jewell brought a whole new light to my college experience. It allowed me to step outside of the classroom and share experiences with people I may have never crossed paths with. I do not think I can share one great memory but all the hard work and hours with my team will be something I will never forget.

How has your Jewell experience impacted what you are doing now?

My Jewell experience and the networking led me to the job I have now. Throughout my experience, I was exposed to many people that had connections to the jobs I was looking for.
Beau Bellem

Major: Interactive Digital Media
First Destination Outcome: Full-Time Intern for Disney College Program Attractions for the Walt Disney Company. Will work full-time for Disney following this internship.
Words to Describe You: Driven. Energetic. Carefree.

“My time at William Jewell helped me to come out of my shell and learn how to develop myself professionally while broadening my horizons beyond my comfort zone.”
How has your Jewell experience impacted you and what you are doing now?

Jewell particularly helped me with my networking skills by encouraging me to collaborate with students from other departments on projects - which is how the Walt Disney Company operates on a daily basis. I’ve already made many helpful connections and have a job opportunity lined up after my internship is over working in the technical side of the company’s entertainment department based on my experience in the field from William Jewell.

What inspired you in college?

The spirit of collaboration and cooperation within the Jewell Theater Company (JTC) continues to inspire me to this day, because creativity thrives in a collaborative environment. Cooperation also cultivates lifelong relationships and friendships around those shared experiences. I will never forget the electric feeling of the opening night of JTC’s production of Godspell where weeks of hard work by the whole company came together to create a truly wonderful show.