Up Close: Failure Is Not an Option

Lindsay Niedringhaus ’07
FAILURE IS NOT AN OPTION
Katy Wynn ’09 found magic in Hollywood but “invincibility” at Furman.

“At Furman, I always had a love for the outdoors. I explored the Swamp Rabbit Trail with the Outdoors Club when it was still a railroad, and I completed a summer research project related to business and sustainability when ‘sustainability’ was still a buzz word. ‘I also loved Conan—O’Brien, that is. Well, really, I loved all late-night television, but Conan was always my favorite.

“My senior year, I still wasn’t 100 percent sure what I wanted to do with my life. This was right when the economy tanked and jobs were few and far between, so I thought, ‘Why not just go for it? Why don’t I try to work for Conan?’

“Maybe it was the confidence that being a Furman student had given me. Maybe it was my 22-year-old mentality. Whatever it was, I knew I wouldn’t fail, and I knew this was the time to take risks. Thankfully, Furman also had connections, and I found a great one through Career Services.

“So after graduation, I was off to Reveille Productions in L.A., where Chad Bennett ’03 was the vice president of brand development. There, I began as a production coordinator at the studio responsible for shows like The Office and The Biggest Loser.

“I got the initial knowledge that I needed to work in this industry at Reveille. Conveniently, the studio was also on the same lot as Conan O’Brien’s show, so I made contacts there and applied for a position as Conan’s production coordinator when it became available. Before I knew it, I had landed my dream job—just like that.

“Working for Conan was amazing. But soon I realized I wanted to learn more and wanted the experience of working on a network show, learning the macro business side of things. I was also at a position in my life where I could ask myself honestly, ‘What do I care about?’ My answer was the outdoors. This led me to my current job as associate producer for National Geographic Television.

“Now I’m combining the two worlds I loved at Furman—marketing/business and sustainability—and enjoying the best career I could imagine.

“What’s funny is I never once doubted myself or my capabilities. I never considered failing, Furman made me feel invincible.”

—As told to Lindsay Niedringhaus ’07

selected. Bries is owner and broker-in-charge and oversees the real estate side of the Bries Company. She also owns the Primrose School of Greenville, an accredited preschool, which is set to open this summer. Gearhart is jobs connection manager for Goodwill Industries Upstate/Midlands. She manages 11 employment centers.

Minda Larsen was a member of the ensemble of Live from Lincoln Center’s Carousel in New York in April 2013. The production was nominated for three Emmy awards.

Peter C. Netzler has joined AnMed Health Arrhythmia Specialists in Anderson, SC. He did fellowships in general cardiology and cardiac electrophysiology at the Medical University of South Carolina, where he completed an internship in internal medicine. He also worked in the emergency department at the Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center.

Bailey and Amber Brock Player live in Smyrna, GA, where they both teach high school English. Amber is also a novelist, writing as A.L. Player. Her debut novel, a time-travel romantic comedy titled Class of ’98, was published in December 2013.

Anne Marie Tominack Sibal and her husband, Eugene Sibal