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Saying Yes

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SAYING YES.

ANEESH BORAH '18 found his voice at Furman. | by Lindsay Niedringhaus '07

In the four years that he was at Furman, **Aneesh Borah '18** completed three majors, worked three jobs (at the same time) and participated in numerous clubs and organizations. According to Borah, there are people who are talented, and then there are people who “do a lot and learn from the experiences.” He sees himself as part of the latter group.

“I like to stay busy. I see opportunities, and I go after them,” says Borah, who majored in Asian studies, studio art, and information technology. “I look at a lot of my design heroes, and they’ve all said that at the beginning of your career, you should say yes

to everything. So that’s what I’ve done.” His heroes’ advice seemed to work. Borah now lives in New York City working as a junior graphic designer at Penguin Random House, the largest paperback publisher in the world. He is on the brand marketing team, working on everything from bookmarks to email blasts, shelf designs to what they call “event kits,” or the pieces that accompany a book at a conference, presentation or party. He gets to work on big-name brands such as Nickelodeon, Disney, Sesame Street, DC Icons and Superheroes, Dr. Seuss, Little Golden Books and Magic Tree House.

JEREMY FLEMING | COURTESY PHOTOS



Aneesh Borah '18 graduated with three majors: Asian studies, studio art and information technology. Borah is pictured at left with President Elizabeth Davis after accepting the Lillian Brock-Flemming Award in 2018.





A native of Guwahati, a city in northeast India, Borah is no stranger to large cities.

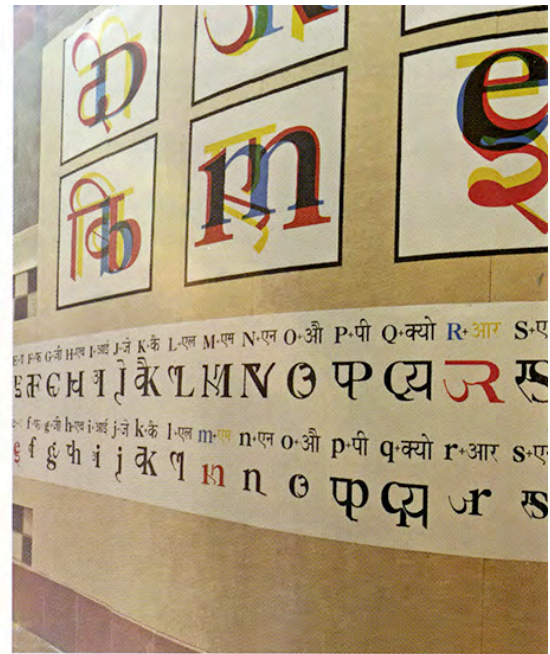
He also spent the last two years of high school in New Delhi, so making the move from Greenville, South Carolina, to New York City felt more like going home than discovering a new place.

“Life moves so fast here,” says Borah. “It’s the only place I’ve ever lived that makes me tired (in a good way), and I love that.”

Borah credits friendships at Furman for getting him, literally and figuratively, to New York.

“My friend, a Furman grad, was working at Penguin Random House

books, and she let me know there was a position open here, so I applied,” explains Borah. “The next thing I knew, I had a job and needed to move to New York in two weeks.” So he moved there and crashed at friends’ places, including many Furman alumni, while searching for an apartment.



When asked what their favorite part of Furman is, a common answer among Furman alumni is “the people.” Of course, the beautiful campus and the top-notch education are also part of those answers, but the students, faculty, staff and alumni always take first place.

It wasn’t a completely seamless transition for Borah. He remembers being the only student from India his freshman year, and that wasn’t a very comfortable feeling at first. But in many ways, this is why he chose Furman.

“I was between Furman and Drexel University,” explains Borah. “I had narrowed it to these two schools because both offered me full scholarships. I am a twin, and my parents didn’t have the finances to send both of us to schools in the U.S., so much of my college decision was based on scholarships.”

But, he says, the international student scholarship is what really put Furman on his radar.

“Furman’s admissions counselor was honest with me, which I appreciate,” Borah says. “He told me that Furman’s international student population was small, and my response was that if I wanted to be amongst a bunch of other Indians, I would have stayed in India. Drexel had a large Indian population, so I purposely chose Furman because I knew I could make a difference there.”

COURTESY PHOTOS



From left: Aneesh Borah '18 pictured at the Penguin Random House Books office in New York City, where he works as a graphic designer.

Borah's final senior show project, shown here, featured a hybrid typeface of Latin and Devanagari.

Borah sits in his office at Penguin.

"I HAVE A VOICE, AND I WANT THAT VOICE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE."

While at Furman, Borah says he became the spokesperson for the international student population, taking an active role in the Furman University International Students Association (FUISA).

"My freshman year, FUISA was really small, and no one knew who they were. I felt like they needed a voice, so I guess I kind of became that. By my senior year, we were hosting events large enough that we had to use McAlister Auditorium to house all of the people. Now, everyone knows what FUISA is."

Borah was also involved in the Student Diversity Council and, along with Furman's Associate Director of Diversity Engagement Deborah Allen, was responsible for bringing a large international flags installation to the Trone Student Center.

"My twin brother was at Dickinson, and when I went to visit him, I noticed they had flags displayed of all the home countries of their

students. I appreciated how it helped the international students feel more at home. So when I got back to Furman, I, along with some other Furman students, spoke with President Davis about it."

And she made it happen.

Borah also made his voice known in the classroom. He recalls his favorite art class, Ross McClain's branding class, in which they worked with real companies who became their clients. The class had to design a logo for My Neighbor's Voice, a local organization that encourages healthy discourse about civic concerns. Each student designed a logo, and then as a class they chose three to present to the client. At first, Borah's logo wasn't chosen.

"But I felt so strongly about what I designed," he explains. "I couldn't be OK with the company not seeing my design."

So Borah kept bringing it up to McClain.

"I don't know if Professor McClain was tired of listening to me or what," laughs Borah, "but eventually he said, 'Fine. Show them your logo, too.' So I did, and they picked it! That's when I knew that this is what I wanted to do with my life."

In many ways, Borah was the typical Furman student who took on a list of clubs, majors, jobs and responsibilities, including an internship with Furman University Communications, where he learned from seasoned professionals. He was also involved with the Furman University Student Activities Board and the Japan Summer Experience.

"Above all, Furman has taught me that if I'm not able to give 100 percent to something, then I shouldn't do it," Borah says. "I have a voice, and I want that voice to make a difference." ●