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"The Life and Miracles of Fisher Alumna Katie Kreutter, 2009"

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Abstract

In lieu of an abstract, below is the essay's first paragraph.

"I still find it difficult to believe that I am writing this submission for *Verbum* as a Fisher alumnus, and that soon a full semester will have passed since I was enrolled as a full-time student. Looking back on my time at Fisher, I fondly recall courses and professors that positively impacted the quality of my educational experience, as well as clubs and students that similarly supported my social experience. While I do not consider myself to have any sage advice to offer current students, I will say that in my opinion it is beneficial to become involved on campus and truly enjoy being a student because, as in any other area of life, this time is fleeting and tends to pass by much more quickly than anticipated. While regrets are fairly inevitable, they can be prevented to some extent with a conscious effort. For those who may be approaching graduation and concerned about the current job market, I will also say that, based on personal experience, there may be more opportunities available than one might think."



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A Post-Graduation Reflection

I still find it difficult to believe that I am writing this submission for *Verbum* as a Fisher alumnus, and that soon a full semester will have passed since I was enrolled as a full-time student. Looking back on my time at Fisher, I fondly recall courses and professors that positively impacted the quality of my educational experience, as well as clubs and students that similarly supported my social experience. While I do not consider myself to have any sage advice to offer current students, I will say that in my opinion it is beneficial to become involved on campus and truly enjoy being a student because, as in any other area of life, this time is fleeting and tends to pass by much more quickly than anticipated. While regrets are fairly inevitable, they can be prevented to some extent with a conscious effort. For those who may be approaching graduation and concerned about the current job market, I will also say that, based on personal experience, there may be more opportunities available than one might think.

At the start of the spring semester last year, I was only months away from graduating and I still had no answer to that timeless yet ultimately frustrating question, "What are you going to do with your life?" As a Communications/Journalism and Religious Studies double major, I was aware that there were many possibilities available to me. However, with the plummeting job market and no clear direction, I still felt uneasy and confused. I explored various career search engines, applying to any position for which I thought myself even remotely qualified both locally and thousands of miles away. No luck. Despite these set-backs, I remained hopeful that an opportunity would present itself. To my immense relief, one did. A few weeks before spring break, I received an email from Fisher's Director of Community Service, Sally Vaughan. It described a year-long service program called Rochester Youth Year involving recent college graduates who were placed at non-profit organizations in the community in an effort to reduce poverty levels among youth. Although it was addressed to the entire campus community, I felt that it was speaking directly to me. I had always been interested in and involved with community service, and had been considering the option of entering into the non-profit field after graduation. I soon discovered that the program is a division of AmeriCorps*VISTA, which is a national volunteer service network offered by the federal government. With very little prior knowledge about AmeriCorps, I set out to research the

program, and became increasingly interested as I learned. I applied to and interviewed for the program, and was notified of my acceptance just in time for graduation!

After interviewing with several participating non-profit organizations, I was selected to work with Compeer Rochester, Inc., which is a volunteer mentoring agency for youth and adults in mental health treatment and youth with parents who are incarcerated. I was assigned a year-long project with the goal of establishing more of a community presence for Compeer and increasing its partnerships and collaboration with organizations in the Rochester area.

I am now a few months into my service, and I can honestly say that I enjoy what I am doing. The work in which I am engaged fits well with both of my college programs of study with a service component reflected in the Religious Studies curriculum and marketing and public relations prevalent in the area of Communications/Journalism. I feel that I am part of an effort to improve the quality of life for community members, and such a feeling is incredibly rewarding and meaningful. I still remember the words of the keynote speaker at my graduation ceremony. He said that true success can be found in one's eagerness to return home to one's family at the end of the work week along with one's eagerness to return to work on Monday morning. In light of this definition, I feel as though I have succeeded, even if it is only for this short time. I highly recommend this program, and would strongly encourage students to explore it along with other AmeriCorps programs as options for post-graduation advancement. It is a worthwhile opportunity with numerous benefits, both tangible and intangible, and, like my college experience, it will not soon be forgotten.