

GLIMPSE YOU ARE SUCCESS

Issue 2

A collection of students' stories and voices as narratives of success and the many forms and paths success can take.
Produced by the Academic Success Center with cover art by Clara Herbage.



"YOU'RE FABULOUS. JUST KEEP GOING."

Jamie dreamed of going to college since she was a child, and she has relentlessly pursued that goal. As a teenaged mother, Jamie earned her GED while working to support her daughter. She later had a son, and as a single mother of two, worked to support her family by becoming a manager at Walmart. She ultimately got a scholarship that would start her path to community college and OSU. Jamie works hard to teach her children that “even though life happens, you still have to press forward and better yourself no matter what you do.”

Jamie explored a wide range of classes in college. When she discovered Human Development and Family Sciences (HDFS) at OSU, she connected with the courses immediately: “It just made so much sense to me... it’s like my life ha[d] been training me for this...” She is grateful for Dr. Kathy Greaves taking time to get to know her and encourage her interest in the field.

Finding HDFS gave Jamie direction for her degree. Like most students, studying, working, and balancing family have been challenging. It’s Jamie’s kids that keep her going—knowing they’re always watching her and learning from how “[she] react[s] to life.” Jamie’s 17-year-old son has attended OSU classes with her, and Jamie has shown him how to take notes. Now, they study together at home. As Jamie says, when you’re a

parent, “You’ve got to be able to talk to the talk” but you’ve also “got to walk the walk.”

Jamie shows her kids the hard work that goes into learning and doesn’t hide the challenges. Instead, she emphasizes having a positive response, “You’ve just got to be able to do it: pick yourself up. I’ve shown [my son], yeah, [I] have a meltdown because, I’m human, I melt down.” However, Jamie says it’s “in those seconds after [the meltdown] where you go, ok, what do [I] do next?...[I’ve] hit a block. How can I get around it, out of it, beside it?” In her time at OSU, Jamie has honed her strategies for overcoming obstacles, and she encourages other students to do the same.

Thinking back on her start at OSU, Jamie offers advice for those who feel a little lost as she did, “OSU was this huge entity and I was afraid of what to do, where to go, how to get there.” She encourages new students, “Don’t be afraid; just go do it.” Jamie is all about taking action and finding ways through fear and challenge. Her words to a frustrated student retaking classes sum up her perspective perfectly: “You’re fabulous. Just keep going.”

For Jamie, graduating is a huge milestone, as she’s accomplishing the dream she had since childhood. Moving forward, she is taking a year off before pursuing a graduate degree, but her ultimate goal remains the same: “to show my kids that anything’s possible.”

Jamie McEdwards graduated in September, 2016, with a B.S. in Human Development and Family Sciences

KRISTA BURROWS

HAS BEEN

- ✔ an athletic training (AT) student in the College of Public Health and Human Sciences
- ✔ an AT student intern with OSU football, soccer and gymnastics
- ✔ an AT Club Member (President 2016-17)
- ✔ a Peer Health Advocate
- ✔ an Individualized Movement and Physical Activity for Children Today (IMPACT) Volunteer
- ✔ a Multiple Sclerosis Exercise Program (MS Clinic) Volunteer
- ✔ a Student Incidental Fee Committee (SIFC) member
- ✔ a CAPS Budget Advisory Board member (Vice-Chair 2016-17)
- ✔ a CAPS Mind Spa Coordinator (student employee)

WHEN KRISTA ARRIVED, SHE

- ✔ was excited to be on her own
 - ✔ looked forward to college with friends
 - ✔ struggled to adjust to college: living with roommates, paying her bills, & juggling multiple commitments
- ✔ get to know people in her field
 - ✔ meet a diverse group of people on campus
 - ✔ contribute to her life & work experience, which will
 - ✔ strengthen her resume

KRISTA’S

- ✔ passed the board of certification exam to be an athletic trainer
- ✔ accepted a graduate assistant athletic trainer position at the University of South Carolina

KRISTA SAID YES TO ALMOST EVERY OPPORTUNITY SHE WAS OFFERED, IN ORDER TO

FOR KRISTA, SUCCESS IS

- ✔ feeling fulfilled
- ✔ loving what she does every day
- ✔ challenging herself
- ✔ overcoming hard times

Krista Burrows graduated in June, 2016, with a B.S. in Athletic Training

SPOTLIGHT ON: ARMANDO KRAYNICK

When I was eight years old, I moved to the United States from Albania. My aunt and uncle adopted my two brothers and myself, so that we could have a quality life, filled with opportunities, here in the United States. Moving here obviously had its challenges, including moving to a new country where we didn’t know the language and culture, and leaving family and friends back in Albania.

When I lived in Albania, it was a third world country. We were a family of five that lived in a one-room building (technically it was two rooms, but the second was only used for storage, because it wasn’t structurally sound). My parents were unemployed or, when my dad did find work, it was construction for \$10/day. I remember how my mother wouldn’t eat things like eggs and milk so she could save it for us kids. My background and growing up in poverty (poverty was widespread in Albania at that time, it wasn’t just us, since communism had just collapsed and it was transitioning to a capitalistic economy) is a huge motivator that helped me push ahead through my own adversity. My family both here and in Albania have also been extremely loving and supportive, especially when it comes to education. Although I grew up in a very thrifty environment, education was always prioritized; anything we needed for school we usually got.

There is always a way to achieve your goals; you may have to work hard, but there is always a way.

When we moved here, my aunt and uncle worked very hard to get us immersed in American culture – language, education system, etc. – so we would have the same opportunities as other kids here. It was definitely challenging, but they spent a lot of time at home working with us on academics so we could be successful. I was very involved in high school, played soccer, ran track, and was involved in multiple clubs. I was taking all honors or AP classes, and graduated salutatorian from West Salem High School. This all paid off. When I applied to college, I received two Presidential Scholarships to other universities, and a full-ride to OSU through the Air Force ROTC program. I was also awarded several other scholarships during my time at OSU, and have graduated with a BS in Civil Engineering. I’m currently in the US Air Force.

I was very excited to come to college, to meet new people, live on my own, etc. My first year flew by; there was just so much going on with school, social events, learning new things, being involved in ROTC. I’m extremely thankful to all the people in my life who pushed me to always do better – my parents and aunt and uncle who sacrificed so much to make sure we had a bright future, past teachers, coaches and friends. I will always be thankful [for] this great opportunity it has afforded me. We often take for granted the freedom, opportunity and free society we live in. I know this is a very cliché saying, but I truly believe there is no other country on earth where my story would be possible.

Armando Kraynick graduated in June, 2016, with a B.S. in Civil Engineering

RAE’S GOT SOMETHING TO SAY

Madison Gerber – Rae to her friends—wants to talk about mental health. She wants to talk about it like it’s a normal thing that a lot of people deal with, because it is. According to Active Minds—a national organization dedicated to changing the conversation about mental health—about 26% of Americans ages 18 and older live with a diagnosable mental health disorder. When it comes to college students, 80% have reported feeling overwhelmed by everything they had to do in the past year and 45% have felt hopeless. Rae happens to be part of the OSU chapter of Active Minds, so this issue is on her mind a lot. “How can we be there as a supportive community...if we don’t talk about it? When you know you’re not alone, it can really change things for you,” says Rae.

Rae first got involved with Active Minds during her sophomore year. She eventually became the president of the OSU chapter and helped to coordinate many mental health awareness events on campus. “I got really passionate about mental health advocacy through the national organization,” said Rae. She was really inspired by how much power students have when they feel like their voices are really heard. Rae has been struggling to be heard her whole life. She was never ashamed to talk about mental health; it’s just that other people didn’t want to hear about it. “All through high school, I realized I kept getting hushed when I started talking about it, and then especially in college when I tried to be open about it...it was definitely not something that people felt comfortable with.”

Finding like minds through Active Minds was like a breath of fresh air. Finally, people wanted to talk about mental health. “I was at a point where I thought that my academic struggles—and I was struggling with some mental health issues—were always going to dictate how successful I was. And I never thought I could move forward and I was always stuck.” Another breakthrough for Rae was being tested for ADHD and learning that this challenge was responsible for much of her academic struggle. “I got on academic probation multiple times...I went to class and studied really hard, but something just wasn’t clicking.” Thankfully, someone noticed. Dr. Devon Quick took the time to work with Rae one-one-one and helped her adjust her approach to learning. Rae found the support she needed to succeed at OSU so that she could advocate for others. “I do a lot of work for mental health advocacy, and I work for student government, and I do research, and I think the biggest reward is doing that work and advocating for those who were essentially in my position,” said Rae.

When you know you’re not alone, it can really change things for you.

with my own struggles.” No matter what Rae does in the future, she knows she’ll keep talking about mental health and wellness. It’s a conversation that never ends and the voices are getting louder.

Rae Gerber is currently studying Psychology, with a minor in Public Health

EDUCATION NEVER ENDS

It’s been almost 40 years since his first term at OSU and now Dean Skillicorn is back to finish what he started. This time, he has six kids, balances a demanding job that requires him to work 10-14 hours a day, and somehow manages to study and complete his coursework. Throughout his life, Dean has turned every challenge into an opportunity.

Dean began his bachelor’s program in 1980, but financial stress led him to active duty in the military after three years at OSU. He had been in ROTC and was a member of the National Guard, so it seemed like a logical step. Through the military, Dean got involved with electronics, hoping to work on avionics equipment. Instead, he started working on medical equipment. “Of course, medicine was going through a boom in the 80’s with the advent of CT and, of course later, MRI,” Dean says.

He eventually ended up in his current position at Philip’s Healthcare where, after years as a manager, and with all of his talent and knowledge, his bosses encouraged his return to school in order to advance his career. That’s when he looked at OSU’s Ecampus program and realized it was the perfect fit for him.

There was one more setback last spring—Dean herniated two discs in his neck. One of the discs was up against his spinal cord, which caused him to lose feeling

in his right arm. This made it increasingly difficult to spend long hours in front of the computer at work, on top of the additional 5-6 hours doing homework at night. Though he took a break for surgery and recovery, Dean came back in fall 2016 and was recently accepted to the Professional Business program.

“People kind of laugh and go, what are you trying to do returning to school? But I made a decision that I’m going to go ahead and finish my education.” Dean has decided to go beyond a bachelor’s and finish his MBA, and possibly a PhD. “I love to teach and I love to educate people, so I might finish up my career doing some teaching.”

After all the obstacles he has overcome, Dean has a good grasp on what it means to succeed. “To get to a successful point in your life, you have to have failure and be able to learn from those failures,” Dean says. “... I’ve had failure in my career; I’ve learned from those failures and it’s made me a better person and a better manager.”

For Dean, failure has just been another word for opportunity. He’s done so much in his life and, on top of it, he’s maintained an optimistic and curious outlook. “For me, personally, it’s been a fun journey...I just enjoy education, I enjoy learning—I always have—and to me, life is a journey about education and it never ends.”

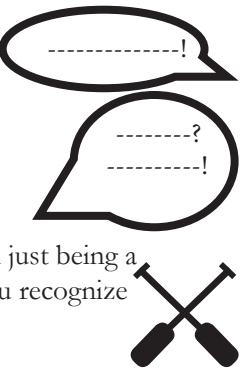
Dean Skillicorn is currently studying Business Administration

ANNEMARIE BY ANNEMARIE

The first year was hard. [OSU] felt like this huge world around me that I wasn’t a part of. I think it took until the end of my freshman year to really feel like, ok, this is home, I am a student here.



My sophomore year I took a [Communications] class because all freshmen are required to, and I just loved COMM. I loved studying how to talk to people, how to read people. I didn’t really want to major in it so I decided just to minor in it. It’s fun to learn about different things outside of Business. I called [COMM] my ‘fun’ classes because it was an opportunity to learn with a new group of students.



[The first year was] a struggle, but also an opportunity to learn more about myself [and] meet diverse and unique people that I call friends.



GERMANY

I went to Germany my junior year and just loved it. [L]earning from a different country’s system is interesting and challenging. I also really took advantage of outside-of-the-classroom learning experiences. [T]here’s a lot you can learn in classroom, but actually engaging in internships, clubs, or workshops - I think sometimes those are more beneficial because it’s people-to-people, real life.

OFFICE HOURS: RIGHT NOW!

I definitely built personal relationships with our advisors and [with] support faculty. I [got] to know professors because I took it upon myself to go to office hours and just introduce myself.

SPOTLIGHT ON: ELLIE BOHRER

I have had the opportunity to work as an academic coach for three years. I have loved getting to work with students and helping them to achieve their academic and personal goals. I’ve also worked as an undergraduate researcher in the Kutzler lab working on several projects including studies on canine mammary tumors and reproduction in free-roaming cats. I enjoyed working as a public relations ambassador for the College of Science, which included giving tours to prospective students and working at alumni events.

I came into school with really good academic skills, but I didn’t have much in the way of interpersonal or hands-on application skills. These were skills that I really wanted to develop not just because they are important for my career as a veterinarian, but also essential life skills. After getting involved on campus I have had a lot of opportunities to strengthen my communication skills and have become really good at working with lots of different personalities. Through my research position I was also able to learn how to think like a scientist and apply my knowledge to real-world applications.

Staying involved and juggling activities with work and school is all about time management, prioritization, and a little bit of creativity. Luckily, as a coach I learned a lot about how to succeed at this from working with students! I think I was also able to manage everything because I chose to pick a few activities and put all of my effort into them instead of being over-involved and spreading myself thin. I also developed skills for using my time efficiently. This allowed me to stay involved, get my schoolwork done, and have time to socialize.

I consider success to be achieving the goals that you have set for yourself. The important thing is that you keep your goals very realistic; this will allow you to be successful!

One fun fact about me is that I’m a barrel racer on the rodeo circuit.

Before coming to OSU, I didn’t have many opportunities to get out of Oregon. I was very lucky through my research experiences to be able to travel to many cool places such as San Antonio, Texas, Asheville, North Carolina, and Paris, France to present my research. I have really enjoyed getting to interact with the scientists and veterinarians at these conferences. One of my proudest moments was finishing my honors thesis. I have also become a very good communicator and diagnostician through my experiences with academic coaching. And, I’ve accomplished my greatest goal thus far, gaining acceptance into veterinary school!

Ellie Bohrer graduated in June, 2016, with a B.S. in Zoology and a minor in Chemistry, and started at OSU's College of Veterinary Medicine in the fall of 2016



There’s 30,000 students [at OSU], but with the College of Business there are 3,000. I focused on creating that as my home within a bigger community.

My advice [to incoming freshmen] would be just get involved as soon as possible. It really does help to have [a] support system and be engaged with something bigger than just classes and your daily life. [H]aving a close-knit group of friends that is going through the same things really does help.

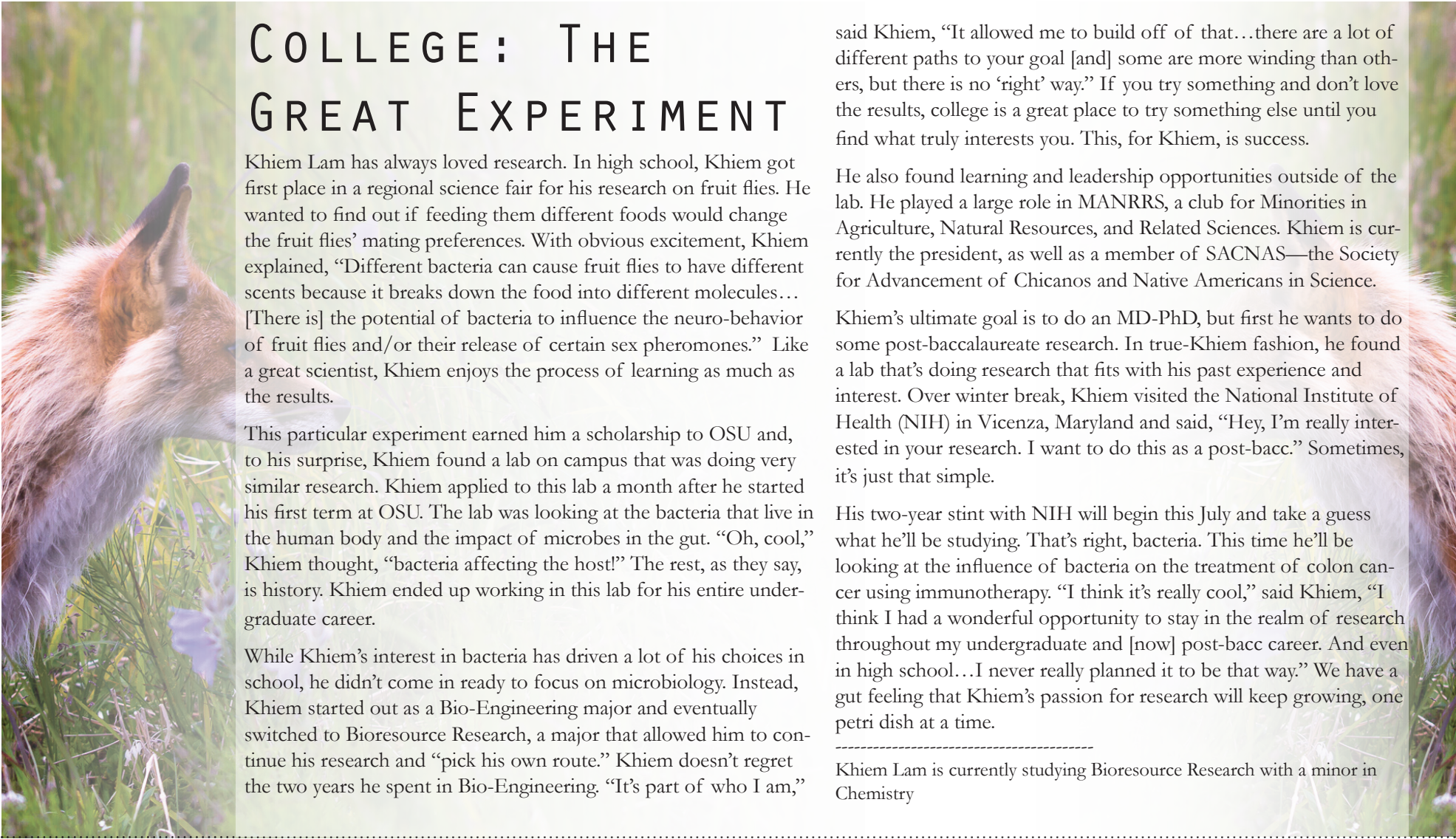
GET INVOLVED!

Annemarie Lewandowski graduated in June, 2016, with a B.S. in Management and Business Administration and a minor in Communication

DYLAN WRIGHT

- Majored in Business Admin with Entrepreneurship option
- Graduated winter 2017
- Took classes at Mt. Hood Community College before coming to OSU
- Walked onto crew when he arrived at OSU his junior year
- Snowboards, a lot
- Spent years fighting wildfires in the summers
- Was part of an OSU team to develop a pasta made of fish – gluten-free, protein-full
- Pitched the pasta to Whole Foods and they dug it
- Thought he’d botched an interview for Advantage Accelerator
- Didn’t botch that interview for Advantage Accelerator and landed the internship
- Participated in Portland State University’s CleanTech Challenge & won the People’s Choice award
- Proposed a safer, mechanized wedge to help loggers when they’re clearing out trees
- Loves competition
- Always feels something can be done better
- Got married last summer
- Is opening Adore Salon in Corvallis with his wife
- Bought a house and thought “I could do that, and do it better”
- Got his real estate license and is a broker with Coldwell Banker Valley Brokers
- Is close with his mom
- Will keep working on the logging wedge as time and money allow
- Is excited to put down roots in Corvallis

Dylan Wright graduated in March, 2017, with a B.S. in Business Administration



COLLEGE: THE GREAT EXPERIMENT

Khiem Lam has always loved research. In high school, Khiem got first place in a regional science fair for his research on fruit flies. He wanted to find out if feeding them different foods would change the fruit flies’ mating preferences. With obvious excitement, Khiem explained, “Different bacteria can cause fruit flies to have different scents because it breaks down the food into different molecules... [There is] the potential of bacteria to influence the neuro-behavior of fruit flies and/or their release of certain sex pheromones.” Like a great scientist, Khiem enjoys the process of learning as much as the results.

This particular experiment earned him a scholarship to OSU and, to his surprise, Khiem found a lab on campus that was doing very similar research. Khiem applied to this lab a month after he started his first term at OSU. The lab was looking at the bacteria that live in the human body and the impact of microbes in the gut. “Oh, cool,” Khiem thought, “bacteria affecting the host!” The rest, as they say, is history. Khiem ended up working in this lab for his entire undergraduate career.

While Khiem’s interest in bacteria has driven a lot of his choices in school, he didn’t come in ready to focus on microbiology. Instead, Khiem started out as a Bio-Engineering major and eventually switched to Bioresource Research, a major that allowed him to continue his research and “pick his own route.” Khiem doesn’t regret the two years he spent in Bio-Engineering. “It’s part of who I am,”

said Khiem, “It allowed me to build off of that...there are a lot of different paths to your goal [and] some are more winding than others, but there is no ‘right’ way.” If you try something and don’t love the results, college is a great place to try something else until you find what truly interests you. This, for Khiem, is success.

He also found learning and leadership opportunities outside of the lab. He played a large role in MANRRS, a club for Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Related Sciences. Khiem is currently the president, as well as a member of SACNAS—the Society for Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science.

Khiem’s ultimate goal is to do an MD-PhD, but first he wants to do some post-baccalaureate research. In true-Khiem fashion, he found a lab that’s doing research that fits with his past experience and interest. Over winter break, Khiem visited the National Institute of Health (NIH) in Vicenza, Maryland and said, “Hey, I’m really interested in your research. I want to do this as a post-bacc.” Sometimes, it’s just that simple.

His two-year stint with NIH will begin this July and take a guess what he’ll be studying. That’s right, bacteria. This time he’ll be looking at the influence of bacteria on the treatment of colon cancer using immunotherapy. “I think it’s really cool,” said Khiem, “I think I had a wonderful opportunity to stay in the realm of research throughout my undergraduate and [now] post-bacc career. And even in high school...I never really planned it to be that way.” We have a gut feeling that Khiem’s passion for research will keep growing, one petri dish at a time.

Khiem Lam is currently studying Bioresource Research with a minor in Chemistry

HOW ZACHARY SUNDARA SEES SUCCESS

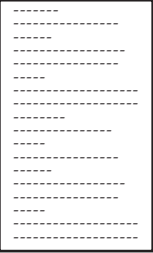
Success is different for every person. It’s about setting goals for yourself and seeing whether or not you have the ability to achieve them. And the standard could be down here and somebody else’s could be up here, but if you’re reaching yours, that’s success.



I was looking in my room and I saw this huge stack of business cards...I was reflecting and I was like, “You’ve talked to so many people!”... I’ve always followed up with those people and I still follow up with some of them now...just try to keep those relationships alive.



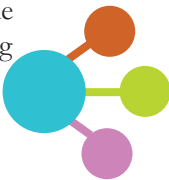
Have you ever written a letter to yourself five years from now? I look [at] me five years from now and I set those goals for who I am and where I see myself five years from now. And I know that when I get to those five years, I’m probably not going to be that person - you’re never going to hit that standard or expectation; you’re always going to be working toward it.



During the sophomore year to junior year period, I really started to understand that you’re here for a bigger reason, not just to party but to get an education and to pay it forward, to give back--whether it be to family or friends or the youth.

PAY IT FORWARD

[I] never missed a career fair. I felt like, if I kept going to every career fair, [and saw] the same faces, I realized it was more valuable than an education, really, because building those connections and those relationships--it’s what’s going to help you in the future.



Show respect and you will receive respect, pay it forward, and never settle for mediocrity, because if you want to be successful and you want to really excel, you can’t be setting your standards too low. You’ve gotta set high standards for yourself.



Zachary Sundara graduated in June, 2016, with a B.S. in Finance and a minor in Economics

GETTING AHEAD BY LETTING GO

With over 100 credits under her belt, Cassidy Radloff came to OSU ready to tackle a double major and pursue study abroad opportunities. In high school, she participated in the International Baccalaureate degree program, as well as AP classes. “Setting myself up for the next level has always been on my mind,” said Cassidy. But then she ended up changing her major and pursuing work that she didn’t even know existed. Though she’s always been a planner, Cassidy found that you often can’t plan for the best opportunities.

Before coming to OSU, Cassidy didn’t know about the Student Sustainability Initiative (SSI) or the Healthy Youth Program, both of which set her on a path to her current work. Through SSI, Cassidy got the opportunity to work on grants for research, projects, and professional development relating to sustainability. With

the Healthy Youth Program, she was the Nutrition and Garden Education Assistant, which means Cassidy got to teach after-school cooking classes and lead garden clubs. “I didn’t think anything like that was out there, so it was kind of something I stumbled upon, and then I dove right in,” Cassidy said.

It wasn’t until Cassidy gained experience as a Nutrition and Garden Education Assistant that she realized she was interested in policy work. When she saw connections between policy, food and education, she found her true passion. As the Corvallis Farm to School Coordinator, she collaborates with groups across the school district so they can offer nutrition and garden education. Not only that, Cassidy also works on wellness policy and connects food service with farmers in Corvallis so that children can eat healthy, local food.

Eventually, Cassidy sees herself doing policy work at the city, state, or even national level. When she started looking for jobs, she was looking everywhere but Corvallis. Again, she had to change her plans when

the right opportunity presented itself. Though she still plans on going to graduate school, gaining experience as a Farm to School Coordinator was too good to pass up, so she’ll happily stay here a few more years. Here, children are adventurous and willing to try Brussels sprouts.

Overall, the real lesson Cassidy learned is that planning is great, but being open to change is just as important. “I was always a planner and I had a four-year plan when I came to OSU, I mapped out all my classes and all this stuff, and of course I changed my major, and I started working and things changed, and everything worked out better than I ever could have imagined,” Cassidy said. “Kind of letting go of some of that was something I had to keep in mind. It worked out really well.”

Cassidy Radloff graduated in June, 2016, with an H.B.S. in Sustainability

You've just read the Academic Success Center's (ASC) second issue of GLIMPSE, a collection of students' stories and voices as narratives of success and the many forms and paths success can take. This issue's entries were written by the students themselves or by staff of the ASC, including Anika Lautenbach, Marjorie Coffey, and Sarah Norek. Our sincere thanks to all who've contributed time and effort and thought towards this project. And our thanks to Clara Herbage for gracing our cover with her striking painting.

You can find these stories - and more! - on our website at success.oregonstate.edu/Glimpse, and you can contact us there, too. Let us know what you think. If you're an OSU student, send us your story! We can't wait to hear from you.