



University of Pittsburgh Greensburg

Creative & Professional Writing Alumnus Testimonial

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Kelly Scarff

Class of 2008

I graduated from Pitt-Greensburg in 2008 with an English Writing degree. I focused on poetry classes, since that was my main interest, and I found Professor Vollmer and Professor Jakiela to be the best mentors I've had to date (even after completing an M.F.A.). I also took an independent study with Professor Jakiela where I organized the literary readings and festival, which helped immensely with developing marketable writing and experience (press releases, author bios, event planning).

I didn't know it at the time, but the English Writing faculty at Pitt-Greensburg was, and still is, world renowned. It wasn't until after I graduated that I realized the weight of it. I was taught to write by some of the most talented and prolific writers in poetry, non-fiction, and fiction.

I went on to get my M.F.A. in Poetry at a college in Pittsburgh, but I always returned to Pitt-Greensburg to observe classes and receive advice from the faculty that influenced my writing so much.

The education I received gave me the confidence and skills necessary for competing with other poets for publication. I won the Best Thesis Award in graduate school, and I placed second in a contest from Liquid Paper Press, who published my chapbook "I Fall in Love with Strangers." I was also accepted to a three-week writing residence at La Muse, in France.

Since graduation, I have had many poems published in journals across the U.S. and Canada, and was recently named a finalist for the 2014 Pangea Prize.

I work as a technical editor for the Department of Energy, where I am in charge of scheduling, editing, formatting, and reviewing technical reports, presentations, and white papers. I am also an adjunct instructor at Pitt-Greensburg, where I teach composition.