

Amanda Doyle Herwatic graduated from UCA's CSPA program in 2007. For the last year and a half, Amanda has served as the Director of Student Success and Retention at State Fair Community College in Sedalia, Missouri.



According to Amanda, the CSPA program taught her a lot of valuable skills, but says that it was the overall experience of the program and interactions with her amazing cohort and professors that she credits the most for her positive experience. Amanda says that through her time in the program she learned "about the importance and need for diversity in our lives every day as well as the importance of having an open mind." She says that her cohort members inspired her and taught her "valuable lessons about the importance of perspectives and seeing the world through the eyes of others." Amanda says her experience in the CSPA program helped her "develop the skill of empathy," which she uses everyday with her students and colleagues.

When asked about her proudest moment in her career so far, Amanda said that it was finding her "perfect fit in higher education-improving retention and graduation rates for community college students." Amanda says that she "fell into community college work by accepting an advisor position at Pulaski Technical College in North Little Rock, and immediately fell in love with the community college mission and work." Amanda gives credit to her time at Pulaski Tech for helping her develop a new way to think about higher education and "how impactful the community college can be." Through that first position at a community college, she identified her professional passion.

Amanda says that there are still areas of higher education in which she would love to explore. Amanda says that she would like to find ways to give back in the way that her "forever mentor," Dr. Charlotte Cone was able to do, by serving as a faculty member in a higher education graduate program. Amanda is also interested in researching more about female leadership in higher education and retention and completion strategies for institutions to implement for their students. Amanda dreams of one day being Vice President of Student Services at a community college, or maybe even President. She says that "wherever I am, whatever I am doing, having a voice at the table is important to me. I want to contribute to help an institution to strategically plan in a way that is ultimately best for the student body being served."

Amanda lives in Sedalia, Missouri, with her husband, Benjamin, who is an officer in the US Air Force, and her beautiful daughter, Charlotte, who turned one in October.

If you are an alum of the CSPA Program, drop us a line at psmith@uca.edu to give us an update on where you are now.

Nu'Rodney Prad graduated from the UCA CSPA program in 2008. He currently works at Temple University and last month transitioned from the Assistant Director of Student Engagement in Residence Life to the Director of Student Engagement in the department of Institutional Diversity Equity, Advocacy, and Leadership.

When asked about the proudest moment in his career so far, Nu'Rodney said it was being able to present at the National Conference on Race and Ethnicity on "Methods of facilitating difficult diversity conversations." Through this, he was able to present his "passion on how we can utilize dialogue to dismantle various levels of privilege and oppression within society."

Commenting on the CSPA program, he says that the "most prominent skills obtained through the program involved grant writing, group counseling, higher education law, and research methods." He says that each of these courses highlighted methods he was able to utilize to introduce "innovative ideas as a higher education professional."

Nu'Rodney serves as one of the five chief hearing chairs at Temple University that oversee hearings of university students before the Office of Student Conduct. He is also a member and subcommittee chair for mentor development on the NASPA Undergraduate Fellows Program board which was established during the 1980s to diversify the field of higher education by mentoring traditionally marginalized undergraduate students. Nu'Rodney says he'd love to hear from anyone interested in learning more about the program.



Nu'Rodney is looking forward to pursuing a law degree in the near future "to bring a different level of expertise to higher education in understanding legal principles as well as how diversity impacts educational social policies."