

Ally Butler, Bowling Green University alum

I guess I'm the last one to follow up a bunch of super cool people, and I hope that you think that non-profit marketing is also cool, because that's what I'm here to talk about. So I graduated from Bowling Green in 2018, with a degree in creative writing and a minor in marketing, and I actually started that path because I told the dean of the honors college I wanted to write advertising jingles.

That has not quite happened, but I think of the path I was on, the Prairie Margins literary journal for all four years, and again I had no idea what a literary journal was when I started. But it really was awesome to just be in a community of writers and editors and engage with writing in a way deeper than I think I ever would have gotten out of my degree program otherwise. And then junior year, as Emma mentioned, Bowling Green hosted the FUSE Conference and that was awesome. We got to take everybody around and do guerilla poetry, and just leave poems across campus that I found for like months to come, and it just really showed that this community that I had built at my university was so much bigger than that. That across the country there was other students just like me, who were interested in this kind of niche topic, and we really wanted to share and learn from each other, and just grow ideas.

And then so after that, I don't quite remember how it came around, I think it's because I needed an honors project and liked marketing and liked FUSE, that I approached them and said, "Can I make you a website." So that was the very remedial version of the FUSE Box, and to just have an organization that said, "Sure, do it, like if this is something you're interested in, we're here to support you," and so I had this awesome opportunity to work with this organization to build an online platform for these conferences, to continue that national sense of community that you get in these conferences. But I mean, hopefully, I don't know, I built it and I left. But I hope that people still think that the website has value, and that it creates that sense of community, and it definitely had value for me, because this really was the only thing on my resume that said marketing. It was a topic I was really interested in, I liked the intersection of, like the psychology of marketing versus like the creativity that it allows you with the writing degree.

So after graduation I moved over to Seattle, where I am now, and so that was pretty scary to be in a city you don't know, trying to pitch yourself where you've been working, doing some contract work up until that point. But I actually put the FUSE Box on my resume, I printed out a hard copy of my whole honor thesis that I built off of the FUSE Box, and brought it with me to interviews, and so within a month of being in

Seattle, I started as the Marketing and Communications Assistant for the Northwest region of the Salvation Army. That was Washington, Idaho, and Montana, and that was a really cool opportunity to again see those skills I had built through Prairie Margins, through FUSE, and applying them in this space. I was meeting with a lot of clients and writing their stories so that storytelling, that curating of people's experiences that you get as a literary journal editor, was something I was doing in my job, and then able to turn that into you know advocacy and fundraising materials.

And so I worked there for a year and then now for the past three years I've worked for the Delta Dental branch of Washington, their foundation so continuing that storytelling, the advocacy, specifically around oral health which is pretty cool. And so yeah, like I said, there was a lot of skills that are used in my day to day that I think came from my time with FUSE, like focusing on those diverse perspectives and critical thinking, collaboration skills, audience awareness, project management, knowing how to write a good email. You know you're writing all these rejection emails to people, and you have to learn how to really craft your words. That is a very valuable skill in any job, just knowing how to write a good email to your audience.

But through my current work I have missed working with other writers, working with other students, so I do volunteer every Saturday for an organization called Minds Matter. So I have the opportunity to work with high school students who are really high achieving and have big aspirations, but maybe come from financial backgrounds or school districts where that may not be the options presented to them. So we have the opportunity to work directly and help them build up their skill set, and learn what is valued at the collegiate level, so they can pursue those opportunities.

Yeah so really jumping straight in feet first into the work world is kind of scary, but just know that you have the skills from FUSE, and what you're doing as an editor to really do a lot of things, and that you are a valuable asset, and things you like you can do them as a side hustle, you can do them as volunteer work, or you can find a job that meets all of that.