

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

COUNT ON ME - RANDI BROOKE CASON, '12



Randi Brooke Cason, '12, is balancing college classes and an internship at a prestigious accounting firm during a pandemic. We caught up with her to find out what else she has been up to since her time at Cornerstone.

How would you describe your time at Cornerstone?

I literally spent half of my life at Cornerstone. Since my Grandad (Mr. Moe) is a teacher there, I spent many hours of the day on campus. It was a great place to grow up because I knew everyone (teachers and students) and they knew me. Doing well in school, making good grades, and doing your best, was always stressed. It seemed like there was always a fun event (Chili Cook-Off, Arts Under the Stars, etc.) coming up and lots of opportunities to get involved. There were also a lot of great opportunities in sports. I played soccer, ran track, and played a lot of volleyball.

What is your fondest Cornerstone memory?

I've got a few of them. I loved the field trips in Middle School (Tremont was my favorite). Working on The Cornerstone Christmas Parade Float and riding on the float in the Ocala Christmas Parade. I thought it was so awesome to be on a float waving at thousands of people. I liked winning the Biology division in the Regional Science Fair and finishing second in the Florida State Science Fair.

Did you have any favorite teachers?

Ms. Sieg for Middle School Math and Ms. Hager for First Grade.

Do you have any advice for recent Cornerstone graduates that you wish you had known when you graduated?

In Middle School, it was a lot of extra work, but it will definitely prepare you for high school and college. I never felt overwhelmed in high school or college because of my Cornerstone experience.

Where did you go to high school?

I spent my 9th Grade year at Admiral Farragut Academy in St. Petersburg, FL. I then moved to Wakulla, FL (just south of Tallahassee) where I went to Wakulla High School. I graduated from Wakulla High School in 2016.

Where are you attending college?

Flagler College. First, I went to Tallahassee Community College with the intention of entering the nursing program. After a year I decided that becoming a nurse was not what I wanted to do. I finished my AA degree at Tallahassee CC and moved on to Flagler College where I am finishing my degree Bachelors in Accounting and Finance.

Did you feel that your time at Cornerstone prepared you for your high school/college career?

Very much so. It was clear to all Cornerstone students that we were on a college track and that doing well academically was important. I can't think of but one or two classmates that didn't have the goal of going to college. The challenging course work (projects, exams, etc.) made it possible for me to handle and manage high school and college-level work. Learning to stay organized, time management, utilizing technology...these are skills that have served me well.

Why did you choose Accounting?

As I was beginning my work at Tallahassee Community College to complete my A.A. degree and enter the nursing program, it became clear to me that I was enjoying my math classes much more than my science classes. Not only was I enjoying my math classes, but I was also doing well with them. Under the advice of my college academic counselors, I explored career possibilities in the Finance and Accounting field.

How do you balance work and school?

Right now, I am able to work as an intern at Purvis Gray and attend college classes. The balance of my time is focused on supporting my grandmother who is experiencing some health issues. School, work, and my grandmother...I can manage these things.

What is it like being a college student during a pandemic?

While I definitely have the technology skills to do on-line learning...I do not like it. I like meeting with my classmates and instructors face to face. There is a social interaction doing school real-time that is missing in the on-line world. One benefit that I have experienced is that I was able to be back at home (Ocala) helping with my grandmother while attending school online. I have since returned to Tallahassee to do my intern work.

What did you learn at Cornerstone that you use in your life or at work?

A lot of time has passed since leaving Cornerstone. I would suppose that some of my most basic skills were developed while at Cornerstone, but more importantly, I think that it developed my work ethic. Not just doing a task, but doing a task well. Putting forth your best effort in all that you do. Those are some things that I remember learning at Cornerstone.

What do you do in your spare time?

I like to do some hiking and some travel on weekends to visit some of my college classmates that are homebound during the pandemic. I also go home to Ocala to visit my grandparents when time allows.



Cason with her Grandparents