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Mount Mercy Alumna Graduates from Clarkson University in Three Years

It has become more and more commonplace for college students to take more than four years to graduate from college. However, thanks to the opportunity that Mount Mercy provided for her to take AP and college level classes, Julia O'Sullivan was able to graduate from Clarkson University in just three years. After completing high school, the 2014 Mount Mercy Academy graduate entered college in as a sophomore, thanks to the college credits she earned while attending high school.

O'Sullivan graduated from Clarkson with academic distinction and earned with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Chemical Engineering with a minor in Environmental Engineering. In addition, she was inducted into Omega Chi Epsilon, the Chemical Engineering honor society, in the fall of 2015 and served as vice president of the Clarkson chapter from April of 2016 to April of 2017.

While attending Mount Mercy, O'Sullivan took advantage of the opportunities to earn college credit while still in high school. As a sophomore year she took AP World and as a junior took AP US History, AP English Language and Composition, Spanish IV through Hilbert and college chemistry through ECC. Her senior year O'Sullivan took AP English Literature and Composition and AP Psychology and received credit through Trocaire College for a statistics class.

"I did not fully understand, until I talked to my advisor at Clarkson, how the transfer credits from MMA were actually a great advantage for me. I thought I was only able to graduate a semester early but my advisor said that all the credits from MMA would allow me to graduate a full year early. The credits I had transferred in as many of my elective requirements and therefore I was able to focus more on my in major classes," O'Sullivan remarked. "I was able to graduate in 3 years which saved me an entire year of tuition. This amounted to about \$65,000."

Not only did the education she received at Mount Mercy enable her to graduate in three years, it also helped her make a smooth transition into college. O'Sullivan believed that the Honors, AP and college level classes she took helped her prepare for college. She took more challenging courses while in high school and since her work was held to a higher standard, it allowed her to have an easier transition to the course work she received in college.

O'Sullivan credits the college chemistry course she took through ECC while at MMA as the greatest advantage for her college studies. She was able to skip a general education class that everyone else took because of the transfer credit and go directly into Organic Chemistry. This allowed O'Sullivan to be ahead in the classes required for her major. She believes that the college chemistry class she took while in high school had a large influence on choosing chemical engineering as her major.

When asked whether she felt she was at a disadvantage after attending an all-girls high school and entering a male-dominated field, O'Sullivan felt she was well-prepared for the challenge. "Engineering is male dominated but within the chemical engineering major this trend was not as drastic. I lived on an all female floor during my freshmen year and this aided in my transition to college because it was a small group of girls who had similar interests in the STEM fields," O'Sullivan commented.

This August O'Sullivan will begin classes at the University of Buffalo Law School. She hopes to pursue Intellectual Property law, or more specifically patent law, when she completes her J.D. degree. O'Sullivan believes that her Chemical Engineering degree will give her an advantage in this field.

O'Sullivan also credits her involvement in extra-curricular activities as having had a huge impact on her career and education choices. Her desire to pursue law was confirmed by her participation in mock trial.

"The people at MMA, both the teachers and my friends, were large factors in my academic decisions and they were very resourceful. They helped me a great deal when making certain decisions," O'Sullivan concluded.



Mount Mercy Academy

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