



Kayla M.

Sometimes one just has to ask themselves. Am I happy? Six years and three schools later, I was finally finished with my bachelor's degree in Court Reporting from AIB College of Business in Des Moines, Iowa. However, my college career started in Lincoln, Nebraska, after initially pursuing accounting and eventually transferring to University of Nebraska - Omaha for business. I was very young in the grand scheme of life at 19 and not 100 percent sure on what I wanted to be when I grew up. While working my college job as a bank teller, I realized I wasn't wanting to do this forever. I had a very regular customer who continually brought in large checks and I was always curious about what he did for a living. After asking my boss, she filled me in that he was a court reporter. "How interesting! I need to look into that!" After some initial research on the profession and a "lunch n' learn" with my regular court reporter customer at the bank, I quickly found myself transplanting one last time to Des Moines, Iowa.

Here we were at the first day of school all over again. I had this new and very intimidating machine sitting in front of me with nothing on the keys - oh boy! I loved learning the "secret code" of steno and enjoyed showing off this new language to my friends and family. Like most, I hit speed bumps (pun intended) along the way like everyone does. After a ton of hard work and persistence, I made it to the final speed test a little over three years into my time at AIB.

I remember the day I passed my final speed test. I had worked so hard to get to this point and as soon as I finished, I knew that this test was my last. After a few hours of transcribing my work, I visited the transcription lab to see my grade - PASS! The happy tears in my eyes rolled down my face as I ran back to my apartment across campus to call my mom and tell her I was done!

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But now what do I do? Before finishing my last few tests, I had been searching for jobs across the Midwest focusing on Iowa and Nebraska because that's all I had really known. In May of 2012, I got a phone call from the court administrator in Rapid City, South Dakota, asking if I'd be interested in a position they knew would be opening soon. I had previously completed an internship in Sioux Falls "just down the road" and enjoyed the people and the system there so I figured why not?! I'll apply. After a quick Skype interview, I was asked to set up an in-person interview. Score! How convenient is it that the presiding judge would be in Omaha for his daughter's college graduation? I was offered the job on the spot. I accepted it without thinking twice! A month and a half later, I packed up my belongings and moved over 600 miles to start a new journey.

I've now worked in the Seventh Circuit for eight years this month. I have had the pleasure of working for two wonderful judges as well as filling in for several more along the way. With the experience comes confidence in my writing as the years go on. One of my favorite parts of my career is getting a front row seat to all of the action as well as the wholesome enjoyment with things like adoptions.

EU/HRO*F/PHEU/SKWROB (I love my job!)

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