

Where Are They Now? | Meredith Dean
By: Ashley Biscan



Wisdom, justice and moderation have prominently stood as The Pillars of the Arch for generations, and it is with drive and determination that each graduate of the University of Georgia continues to uphold these powerful tenants as alumni. One graduate in particular has not only honored The Pillars of the Arch, she has built upon them as she advances in her bright and successful future.

Meredith Dean, class of 2014, graduated from the Grady College with a bachelor's degree in digital broadcast journalism. In addition, she earned a minor in French and certificates in both New Media and Business Professionalism. Although she was diligent in her studies, her accomplishments on campus expanded well beyond books.

“The organizations you are involved in shape your experience at UGA,” she said.

Her most honorable memberships were in The Arch Society and the Student Alumni Council. Through the prestigious organizations she learned what it meant to be a humble servant to the school so near and dear to her heart.



She shared her excitement for both the deeply rooted traditions of the university and the esteemed excellence of the Grady College. As an official Grady ambassador, one of her favorite college memories was giving campus tours to young hopefuls, demonstrating her passion to potential Dawgs. She publicly professed her zeal for the opportunities Grady afforded her, networking being one of the most valuable.

On one particular Athens evening, Dean attended the International Reporting Symposium on campus. It was that choice that led her to a summer internship with CNN International Newsource.



“You never know if one conversation could change your life,” she said encouragingly.

After her summer internship, Dean’s resume was overflowing with impressive industry experience starting from her days in high school. Decorated with fully immersive work in France and hands on experience at, but not limited to, Cox Media Group, WSB, the Associated Press and Fox 5 Atlanta. She attests to the importance of internships and building a digital portfolio to carry students into the world as a young professional.

There is a delicate balance between being diligent and waiting for the right opportunity. For Dean, the opportunity presented itself at the 2014 Peabody Awards. Inside Edition’s Deborah Norville spoke with Charles N. Davis, Dean of the Grady College, about seeking strong a candidate to fill a position as her assistant.

“Sometimes it’s really easy to see a rising star. Meredith so confidently led at Grady, day in, day out, so when Deborah asked whether we had a bright young graduate who could work for her, it really was automatic: Meredith!” said Dean Davis.

Those four years at the University of Georgia and even earlier years of dedication paid off, and Dean accepted the position as Norville’s assistant. Having briefly met Norville three years prior through the Student Alumni Council at the Bulldog 100 event, the match couldn’t have been more serendipitous. She made the move to the Big Apple and has been soaking up the energy of the city ever since.

Not only was Norville impressed with Dean’s list of accomplishments and industry experience, she was captivated by her portfolio savvy. Through her coding experience with the New Media Institute at the Grady College, she learned the ins and outs of making stellar portfolios, mobile applications and websites. Aiming to help young professionals, Dean grew her talent into a business, appropriately named The Dean’s List. Dean even fine-tuned a website for Norville herself.

The Dean's List helps students create a personal digital brand and promote their achievements to prospective employers. The business is two fold and abides by the mission of "empowering young professionals and young women."

With this mission, Dean allocates 10 percent of the profits from each digital branding package to Habitat Aid Initiative, her family's nonprofit that supports communities in Kenya. She visits Kenya almost every year to help improve the living conditions through dormitory and water point access for rural Kenyans living in dangerous, poverty stricken areas. Through The Dean's List donations, Habitat Aid Initiative constructed a dormitory at Khwisero Girls School.



"It is amazing if you put your mind to something, you can do anything," Dean said confidently.

Back home in New York City, Dean thrives off of the skyscraping inspiration. Not to mention, she stays connected with the University of Georgia from miles away with the NYC Dawgs. Through the group, she found an instant community among other successful and game day loving UGA alumni.

Dean can never manage to stay away from Athens for too long however. She attends each homecoming game and Grady tailgate and plans to keep the tradition for years to come. As for the rest of her future, she aims to continue to grow both professionally and philanthropically.

The Dean's List is gaining more traction, and she aspires to speak at different universities in the near future, lending insight to students about how to land the job of your dreams. In tandem with her business' expansion, Dean also prioritizes her goal to continue to support the women of Kenya.

"All the students at Grady are unique... special in their own way... but Meredith may be "uniquer" than most. She is a combination of every discipline at Grady... public relations manager, advertising expert, social media savant, news media mogul and entertainment

energizer. I tell people often that the way she's going... pretty soon we'll all be working for her. Carly Fiorina — beware," Michael Castengera.

Dean is a shining example of UGA excellence, someone alumni, faculty, staff and students alike can all be proud of. With an allegiance to her profession and her past, Dean offers an inspiring story to current students about the exciting future beyond graduation.

"College is four OF THE BEST YEARS of your life, but it's not THE FOUR BEST YEARS," said Dean.

The University of Georgia offers an experience unlike any other, and as exhibited by Meredith Dean, it provides its students with the power to take their knowledge and unique talents into the world. The opportunities don't end at the Arch. They begin.

