

JayMac

Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication Alumni Association



GAYLORD ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Hillary Shope, '14

Deputy Head of Communications,
British Consulate General New York

"Years from now, you'll want to look back and know you took the leap, so go do whatever it is that you really want to do."

She's in a New York state of mind. Since her 2014 graduation from Gaylord College, Hillary Shope (DeBruin) has lived her dream of working in New York City. She currently serves as deputy head of communications for the British Consulate General New York and shared what it is like working for the U.K. during an unprecedented time in its history, how her time at OU prepared her for the future and more.

What is your favorite memory from your time at Gaylord College?

I have so many great memories from my time in Gaylord College, but OU Nightly is by far my favorite. I gained hands-on experience by reporting, anchoring, editing and more. That experience was invaluable. Using the software and broadcast equipment that's used in professional studios really prepared me for the workforce, with the tools and knowledge necessary to succeed. I also really enjoyed being a Gaylord Ambassador, so that's a close second. It was a tremendous honor to represent the college that I love.

Did you have a favorite faculty/staff member at Gaylord?

Describe your work at the British Consulate.

As deputy head of communications, I develop and maintain strong industry relationships with trade, business and sector-specific media across New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Fairfield County, Connecticut. I support wider media relation activity around U.K. government policy, support on visits from visiting ministers and senior government officials and work closely with the U.K.'s Department for International Trade. I really enjoy building media relationships and like how the ever-changing news cycle directly impacts my day-to-day engagements.

What do you consider to be the most significant moments of your career so far?

That's a hard one. I think I've been really lucky in being able to work such dynamic jobs thus far. Working at NBC's Today Show right out of college was such an amazing educational opportunity and I'm so proud of the work and time I spent there. In my current role, I'm working for the U.K. government during an unprecedented time. I'm fully engulfed in all things Brexit and it's

Hands down, Mike Boettcher. I was lucky enough to have Mike as a professor and to this day he's still a mentor to me. He's an amazing journalist and has always supported my wild dreams of being in the Big Apple. I learned so much from Mike and am thankful for his mentorship.

How did your career path lead you to the British Consulate?

I've been lucky enough to work in a few different jobs in New York, all of which have taken some hustle. Each role has taught me something new and I've been able to pivot and grow and figure out what I like along the way, what my strengths are, and what's important to me in a job.

beyond fascinating. Years from now, I'll be able to look back and know I worked on something so timely and unique.

What advice would you give to current students aspiring to a career in journalism or mass communication?

Go all in! Years from now, you'll want to look back and know you took the leap, so go do whatever it is that you really want to do. Don't let anyone or anything stop you. Nothing is impossible, and most of all, be kind. Hold on to that kindness no matter what.

What do you do for fun outside of work?

I started running in Central Park after moving to New York and fell in love with half marathons. I've run seven so far and just signed up for another in April! I thoroughly enjoy cooking, skiing, traveling any chance I get and spending quality time with my husband.



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