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Jennifer's Corner

by Jennifer Martin



Working to Make Friends

I apparently missed socialization at Lee. My group of friends is the same as in freshman year or during Summer Honors – both when I actually lived at Lee. Now that I've been off campus for two and a half years and married for one, I feel pretty alienated at school. Everyone already knows each other. All my friends and I have different majors, and as we're on our last leg of school, we no longer have any of the general classes together.

I basically have all the same kids in my classes at this point. All Communications majors. They're in all the same Greek clubs (ugh, don't even get me started on those – I do not care for them) or the same choirs or the same sports teams. The only Lee group I was ever a part of was Lee Clarion, the student newspaper – and even then, most people don't really care about that or pay attention to the names of who writes the articles. Most of the editors were kind of holed up from the rest of student events, editing, writing, and designing in the “publab” as other junior reporters went out and got the scoop and did preliminary research. And anyway, I did opinion pieces – not much need for research there.

And then, I'm married. That alienates me to an extreme extent. I'm married! I must be very different and have some crazy life situation! I could never relate to single students the same age! It couldn't possibly be that I'm career-searching, struggling with classes, or worrying about my future. I must be some housewife who's just in college for fun, basically. So while “married Lee students” seem almost like a cliché, we're still a very small minority.

It's my fault too. I never made an effort to really seek friends outside of class or outside my group of friends. Then again, I never had time. While it seems to me that most students at Lee have only classes to worry about, I had a job, sometimes more than one, internships, housekeeping, chores, or any number of things keeping me busy. Their parents gave them all the money they'd ever need, and they didn't have to worry about anything but studying.

But now as I'm (hopefully) about to graduate from my last semester in college, cum laude, I do think I'm starting to regret not making more friends in my major, or at Lee in general. I do feel envious of all the “cool kids” – something that apparently did not die in high school – all sitting together in all the classes.

However, I'm proud of myself. At the expense of socialization, I've gained a Puritan work ethic. I have discovered the important ability to multi-task. I've juggled marriage, chores, money issues, jobs, school, and homework. I still have my old friends. I still have my supportive family. I've realized I can do it – anything “it” might be. Maybe the cool kids don't know who I am, but I do, and I'm proud of myself.

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