

Alumna Spotlight - Lt. Mary Lowell '98

Tell us about your education and career after you graduated from Visitation Academy.

I graduated from the Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University in 2003. I earned a Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps (NROTC) scholarship to attend Georgetown, which covered all tuition and academic fees.

In return for my scholarship to Georgetown, I served four years on active duty and four years in the Navy Reserve. I completed my active duty on two guided-missile destroyers that were home ported out of Florida and Hawaii. I have completed my Reserve time, but I am continuing my career in the Navy because I enjoy the challenge and adventure. My career in the Navy has given me the opportunity to serve my country, to see much of the world, and to meet and work with a lot of great people.

After I left active duty, I went back to school to obtain a second degree in nursing. When I am not working for the Navy, I am a critical care nurse at Mercy Hospital St. Louis. I decided to make this career change because I did not think it was possible to have a successful marriage and a family with my career in the Navy. I was gone so much while I was on active duty that I could barely keep a plant alive! This is how I am able to live in land-locked Missouri and still have a career in the Navy.

I am actually responding to these questions while underway in the Black Sea. As a Reservist, I have gone back on active duty for a seven-month deployment to the guided-missile cruiser, USS MONTEREY (CG 61). While on active duty, I served on USS HOPPER (DDG 70), a ballistic missile defense (BMD) capable, guided-missile destroyer. I was in charge of the 20 technicians and the combat systems equipment that supported the BMD mission. I am now using my experience from active duty to support MONTEREY on this deployment and to keep my knowledge and training in the BMD mission area current.

How has your Visitation education impacted your life?

My Visitation education set me on a path for success in multiple areas of my life. Spiritually, it helped deepen my Catholic faith, and it helped me to understand my faith and how to live my faith. To this day, I still think about living Jesus, no matter where I am in the world or what I am doing. I still think about and practice placing

myself in the presence of God before I undertake a task. I think about ways to reach out to others and to be of service to others.

Academically, it has helped me to succeed in college and in my time in the Navy; through the hard work of many teachers and the Visitation sisters, it helped me achieve acceptance at a top-ranked university. I not only was accepted to Georgetown, but I graduated with honors. In addition, I spent an entire year while I was at Georgetown studying at the l'Institut d'Etudes Politiques in Strasbourg,

France. I lived with a host family and took all my classes and my exams in French. Athletically, I developed a love for running while I was at Viz, and I still run on a regular basis. Physical fitness is very important to my career in the Navy and to my health in general, and I am grateful for all the athletic opportunities I had at Viz. I really cannot say enough good things about how Viz has impacted my life.

What advice would you give recent graduates?

Follow your heart and your interests when choosing your major in college. Do not be swayed by somebody telling you that majoring in one thing or another will not lead to a job or very much money. Being content and interested in what you're doing on a daily basis is so very important to your overall health and mental outlook. Be yourself and do what makes you happy. ■



Lt. Mary Lowell '98 talking to the press in Romania