

Joanne DeMarco

Personal Statement –MA in Media and Communication Arts graduate application

July 14, 2011

It's Never Too Late to Learn

“It’s never too late to learn.” We have all heard that phrase before. How do you define learning? Is it learning some bit of information in conversation with a friend? Is it looking up on the internet something you did not already know? Is it reading a book or magazine article? Is it getting your hands dirty and trying to fix something? Is it taking classes towards earning a degree? I believe that learning is a compilation of all these, as well as dozens of other ways you can increase your knowledge and learn. I believe that every single day, I learning something new. I have not sat in a classroom in 20 years, but yet I know I did not stop learning 20 years ago. Life itself has taught me many valuable lessons and has increased my knowledge vastly. Although life has taught me a variety of skills over the years, I do wish to return to a traditional method of learning and pursue a Master of Arts Degree in Media and Communication Arts.

First, I feel that I have a lot to offer to the program. My experiences, education and background are what make me unique. Not only do I wish to learn, I wish to “give back” to the University and other students. It’s not all about what I can take from this experience; it’s also about what I can give to others. Sometimes one interaction with another student or professor can result in a learning experience. Not only can I grow from meeting other people with a common goal; through my unique life experiences, I may be

able to help my classmates. I would welcome the opportunity to interact with others and explore media and communication on a higher level. I would like to embrace this opportunity, not only to help myself learn and grow as a person, but to help others learn and grow from their interaction with me. Sharing information and interacting with other people, regardless of the method of communication, are the very essence of the degree I hope to pursue.

Second, I want to serve as an example to others that going to school and pursuing a higher degree is not just for people in their early twenties. I want to be a role model for my family, friends and co-workers. As a staff member at the Lienhard School of Nursing, I am surrounded every day by dozens of brilliant, educated women who have achieved masters and doctorate degrees while working and raising families. It may have taken years, but they did succeed in advancing their education and can be proud of their accomplishments. Since I have started working at Pace, I truly feel inspired by those around me and it has been a motivating factor in applying for the graduate program. I find the atmosphere at Pace to be very positive and one that encourages you to learn and grow. Just as I have been inspired by my colleagues at the Lienhard School of Nursing, I hope I can inspire someone else thinking of going back to school after having been absent from the classroom.

Lastly, I want to prove to myself that I can succeed. For the past twenty years, my final GPA has haunted me. When I was an eighteen year old freshman in college, my focus was not on grades. I had not yet picked a major; I had to adjust to living away from home and was taking classes to fill basic requirements. My grades were far lower than I was capable of and they would later be factored into my final GPA. I took a Speech

Communication class in the summer of 1988, just prior to starting my sophomore year, and finally found what I was looking for! I found something I enjoyed and could relate to. I had just found my major! I no longer felt lost and finally had direction. After choosing Speech Communication as a major and Mass Communication as a minor, my grades improved noticeably. I enjoyed my classes, had adjusted to life in college, matured a bit and my grades improved. My last semester of college was spent doing an internship in the master control room at WNBC at 30 Rockefeller Plaza in New York City. What I learned was invaluable, but the internship was also pass or fail, not helping me in my quest to raise my GPA. Thinking back, I am glad that I did not pursue my master's degree immediately after graduating college. I don't know that I would have had the maturity and drive that I do now, and it may have resulted in a failed attempt at a Master's degree.

I feel that the time has come for me to continue my formal education, and I am excited at the prospect of becoming a graduate student in the Media and Communication Arts program. It will be challenging to juggle school in addition to all the other aspects of my life, and I am fully prepared for that. I have a determination and drive that I know will help me to be successful in achieving my goal. I know it will take time and require a lot of work but I also know I am very capable of achieving this goal. If all goes as planned, I hope to graduate with my M.A. degree in three or four years, knowing that I have achieved a goal I have dreamed about for the last twenty years. When considering me as an applicant, I hope you look at me as a whole person, and what I can bring to Pace. My college transcript reflects the person I was in my late teens and early twenties. The

application I submit to you today is the person I am today. The person who truly believes it's never too late to learn and who is ready to make what I believe into a reality.