Sullivan University was ‘incredible’ at Food Show

Legal Studies Director, Professor Helen Bongard has enjoyed seeing a variety of success stories with her students during her tenure at Sullivan University. Graduate Tanya Newcomb recently spoke with Ms. Bongard about how her degree in Paralegal Studies was in-line with her employability and career goals and how much she enjoys her job.

Tanya began her career in law enforcement in February 2004, as a deputy jailer at the Fayette County Detention Center. That experience introduced her to law enforcement which included working a variety of shifts and duties such as assessing, booking, finger printing and, in some cases, releasing arrestees. In 2007, she began work on her Associate Degree in Paralegal Studies from Sullivan, transferring shifts to attend during the day and work nights. With her shift coverage and being a dedicated student, Tanya sometimes left the jail to come to school in her work uniform after a 16 hour shift. This schedule included raising her five children; she certainly had a full agenda.

In 2009, she had progressed in her program and began her internship with the Fayette County Bar Association. The internship allowed her to attend many Continuing Legal Education seminars which provided the opportunity to introduce herself to many key people in the legal field.

Internship led to new career
In 2010, she received a phone call from the Fayette County Attorney’s office offering her a position with the Circuit Court Child Support Division. Tanya graduated in the Spring of 2010 with an Associate Degree in Paralegal Studies from Sullivan University and became a full time employee with the County Attorney’s Office. Now the network of judges, attorneys and law enforcement agencies that she once networked with, are now associates she interacts with each day.

Newcomb says, “In Court I still see many of the same inmates I oversaw at the jail, but I am no longer in that dark blue uniform. In changing my career I was fortunate to be able to transfer from one county position to another without losing any of my time of service or retirement and no longer have to work nights. I have been with the County Attorney for nearly two years and I enjoy my job which lets me help other people.”

Ms. Bongard adds, “I always called Tanya “Newcomb” since she often came to class in her uniform which identified her by her last name. I recently ran into Tanya at the courthouse and it was great to see she had traded her uniform for a suit. The Fayette County Attorney has hired many of our paralegal grads and it’s wonderful to see Tanya achieve her career goals and move into a professional environment where she helps so many parents and children.”

**ALUMNI UPDATE: Paralegal’s New Career**