In 2000, I was working full time for a large corporation and was trying to earn a promotion to the next technical area of my field. Since I had been at one level for a lengthy time and performed fairly well, I felt I earned the promotion. One of the best bosses I ever had sat me down and gave me the truth. She said, “Ken, unless you go back to school and get your degree you will probably sit for quite some time.” She clarified, “You have all the enthusiasm and talent in the world but you have no credentials to speak of.” Her closing statement stuck with me: “Ken, go back to school and get your degree…you will get that opportunity you’ve been waiting for.” I made up my mind to go on to continue my education and earn my opportunities. I enrolled in Sullivan University and was pleasantly surprised at the great atmosphere and quality teachers.

It wasn’t long before I had my first opportunity to interview for a promotion. I shared with the interviewer that I was at Sullivan and was working towards an associate degree. Amazingly, I got the job. Later on my new supervisor told me that it was in no small part due to my being in school.

After this promotion, I was determined to continue my education and obtain my Bachelor’s degree. It was a lot of hard work, missed TV ball games, late night studying, writing papers and of course the time in class. However, in October of 2004, I earned my Bachelor’s degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Computer Science which made it all worthwhile. Not long after earning my degree, I was informed that I had qualified for the next promotion level. In January of 2005, I was informed of another promotion opportunity. I shared with the interviewer that I was at Sullivan and was working towards a promotion.

Dedicated to his memory

This important background is what makes Aron Houdini tick. As Aron stated, “I am really the only living Houdini in the world. I emphasize this because it is important to me to stay true to the style of Harry Houdini. I was doing nearly a hundred years ago.” He continued, “I have worked hard to perfect my escapes and tricks to replicate the style of Harry Houdini.”

Houdini’s name has meant much to me. For nearly 26 years, Houdini had no supernatural powers of any kind. For me to be able to perform magic to pass a test, performed by a Sullivan paralegal student, is still regarded as one of the best-known performers and promoters in theatrical and film history. Houdini’s name has meant the ability to escape from any restraint or difficulty situation; he always insisted that all his escapes were by natural means, and that he had no supernatural powers of any kind.

Shannon Newsome, a Paralegal Studies student, has a passion for the written word that goes beyond the law. Newsome recently received word that a poem she submitted to the International Poetry Association was selected for publication. Her poem, entitled “Homeless,” relates to the plight of the homeless in our society. The number of homeless and how they are treated is of personal concern to Newsome. “Everyone should be treated equally, even when they are going through financial trouble,” stated Shannon. “Homeless people are just like everyone else - they need to be accepted,” she added.

Newsome plans to attain her associate degree in paralegal studies, and continue her education for her bachelor’s degree, and if I can keep up my grades, move on to law school.” So far, everyone finds the law very interesting.

The more I learn about the law, the more I want to learn even more,” Newsome said. From her poetry to her study of the law, Newsome hopes to help those in society who are less fortunate.

To read Newsome’s published poem, go to poetry.com, and enter “Shannon Newsome” as the author or “homeless” as the topic.

In his shows, Aron performs a real Straight Jacket Escape. Aron says, “All my escapes are real, they are not magic tricks.” He also holds world records for Longest Time Spent in a Sealed Casket, With No Air - 72 minutes, and for being the Youngest Person to Escape a Real Straight Jacket. He currently is working on another world record for Most Escapes from Police Handcuffs. Aron has twice been voted the Kentucky Entertainer of the Year.

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importance of education

Aron decided to come to Sullivan and enter the paralegal studies program, even though he continues to perform on a regular basis and has a promotional website, http://houdiniaron.tripod.com.

“Aron, I take advice from many magicians. A magician that I think highly of, Lance Burton once said to me that education was still important. Most of my escapes are really dangerous. I realized I need to have a second vocation.”

Small car, big plus

“I chose Sullivan University because I heard so many great things about it,” stated Aron. “In the past I have broken my back twice. The small campus helps me when I am hurting or having a bad back day. I don’t have very to walk.” He continued, “I have friends who are attorneys, and have always been interested in the law. After Sullivan, I plan on attending law school.”

Bright future

So what else does the future hold for Aron? He wants to continue doing shows, as well as doing charitable events. He plans to mix his legal career with his show biz career. According to Aron, “I can mix them together. Most of David Copperfield’s ushers are attorneys, he is very strict about who works for him. Once I finish school, perhaps I can work for David! I know I will perform for the rest of my life, or until my body says I can’t.”

So stay tuned. The next time you hear about Aron Houdini he could be onstage at Sullivan, working in a law office, going to law school or appearing on the Tonight Show - or all of the above! Now that’s magic!