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Retrospective Writing

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Melissa Cavaliero and Barbara Conti.

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Retrospective Writing

by Melissa Cavaliero
edited by Barbara Conti

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Abstract

The past four years I have devoted my studies to science and mathematics. While I have loved studying these subjects, I wanted to take the opportunity of the Senior Honors Project to explore a different field. I chose the field of writing. Being able to tell a story is one thing, but being able to tell a story well and in writing is another. The focus of my project is retrospective writing. The six written essays will be from the age of five when I entered first grade through my college years. A series of pictures will correlate with each essay. This will allow the reader of my work to compare their personal image to the real image from points in my life. The six essays will also highlight significant moments in my life as well as my most vivid memories. Essentially, "a picture is worth a thousand words."

The progression of these essays will allow me to improve my writing through editing, tone, and style. As a student at the University of Rhode Island, I have learned the importance of being well-rounded. For the past four years as a major in Bio Science, most of my writing was in research and lab report format. For my Senior Honors Project, I chose a storytelling format to be more creative in my writing.

My time spent in English 243, *The Short Story*, inspired me to complete this project. Dr. Barbara Conti, the professor of this course, provided me with excellent feedback on the required writing assignments from her course and I wanted to do more. Dr. Conti and I have been able to bounce ideas off one another so that the essays are both well organized and well written. My final pieces will showcase a mixture of reflection and emotion. The final product will connect both picture images and written work to tell of my journey in a series of short stories.

Essay 1

Looking back on my educational path, I realize how amazing my experiences were. As the daughter of a military man, I attended five different schools in five different locations over the span of first grade through senior year of high school. I spent first grade through fourth grade in Landstuhl, Germany and then moved to Dover, Delaware for fifth grade and one semester of sixth grade. After a short year and a half, my family moved to Bitburg, Germany where I finished sixth grade and continued through eighth grade. We then moved to New Jersey where I spent my freshmen year at one high school and my sophomore through senior years at another high school. I may not have grown up in the same school system, but I had the opportunity to experience education in different environments, which was a beautiful lesson of its own. I have countless memories from these years, but for this project I know exactly where to begin.

My first grade teacher, Mrs. Baker, will forever be in my mind. Because of her, to this day I can name all fifty United States in alphabetical order. Our class rehearsed the song "Fifty Nifty United States" in works of putting together a show for our parents. We created costumes that resembled the American flag and we practiced and practiced. Our class wrote and produced a fantastic show and although it has been sixteen years, I could sing that song perfectly at any given moment. Mrs. Baker was a caring teacher and I am so thankful to say that she was part of my educational journey. When the end of first grade arrived and it was time to say goodbye, it was upsetting to leave Mrs. Baker, but I was ready for second grade.

Second grade was the start of a unique year. I had two teachers for one class that year and they were married – Mr. and Mrs. Dominico. They did not have children of their own so I would like to believe they thought of their students as their children. My memories of Mrs. Dominico are not nearly as vivid as they are of Mr. Dominico, mainly because he taught the majority of the class. My most significant memory from his class was when he brought in squash for the entire class to eat. I was the only student who fell in love with this food and from that day forward, every other week, Mr. Dominico would bring in a bowl of squash for me because he knew how much I loved it. My mother, as I grew older, would tell me that Mr. Dominico was very fond of me and he predicted that one day I would be an author. Writing about him today makes me wonder if I ever will become an author and if his prediction was accurate. While it yet again was sad to say goodbye to another teacher, the time for third grade had arrived.

I must say the most frightening teacher I have ever had was Mrs. Burckle in the third grade, but I learned a lot from her. What stands out to me from this year was our reading assignment as a class where we opened our minds to the Harry Potter Series. Together we read the first book – *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*. Little did I know that this book would be a huge hit in the future. The main reason I was so terrified of Mrs. Burckle was because my first memory of having to speak in front of an entire class alone was in this class. I remember being so nervous and telling her that I could not do it. She made it clear that I had to and that I did not really have a choice. I am so thankful for Mrs. Burckle because she freed me of my fear of public

speaking in the third grade – I owe her one! The third grade came to an end, but I knew from what Mrs. Burckle had taught me, I was ready for fourth grade.

Similar to the second grade, I had two teachers, but they were not married and taught in separate classrooms – Mr. Wilburn and Mrs. Hurley. While Mr. Wilburn taught mathematics and social studies, Mrs. Hurley balanced our education by teaching spelling and language arts. I have two clear memories from each classroom and I must say that this was one of my favorite years in grade school. In Mr. Wilburn's class, we were assigned to give a presentation on one of the fifty United States. I selected Texas because my mother's family is from there. I remember being confident in my presentation, as I knew the third grade had prepared me to speak in front of others. I, of course, remember the lime green poster board I used in which I glued on a picture that outlined the state of Texas as well as the state flag. While I was presenting on states with Mr. Wilburn, I made sure to study my spelling for Mrs. Hurley's class. If we received a perfect score on our spelling test, we were allowed to go up to the big treasure chest at the front of the classroom and choose a treat. Mr. Wilburn and Mrs. Hurley were completely different teachers, but both taught me important lessons and prepared me to move on in school. As I said goodbye to these two amazing teachers, it was also time to say goodbye to Landstuhl, Germany.

My years as a first grade through fourth grade student were crucial. I learned important information and I met wonderful people. I remember the awesome playground I had for recess, the section of large rocks my friends and I would always jump off of, and I remember lining up on the massive set of basketball courts before we walked to class every morning. These first four years of my educational journey

gave me truly wonderful memories. So many memories flash through my mind reminding me of how I became the person I am today.

Essay 2

Over half of my childhood years were spent in Europe. I was born in Madrid, Spain, resided there for three years, spent four years in Landstuhl, Germany, and two and a half years in Bitburg, Germany. I do not remember living in Spain because I was just a baby. All of my amazing memories of traveling in Europe come from the ages of five through eight and ten through twelve. I may not have grown up in one single home, in the same bedroom, with the same people, and the same environment, but I would not have traded my childhood for anything. My brothers and I have hilarious memories from France to Luxembourg, Italy to Holland, and the Czech Republic to Austria.

My father is a bike-riding fanatic. He idealized Lance Armstrong and living in Germany gave him the biggest opportunity to take his family to 'Le Tour de France' – so he did just that. We drove from Landstuhl, Germany to Paris, France. My older brother, Micky, and I constantly annoyed our little brother, Nick, who was in the back seat of the car. Half of the drive we spent picking on Nick and the other half of the drive our dad would yell at us for picking on him. These were the good times! This happened every time all five of my family members were in the car together. When we arrived in Paris and settled in to the hotel, it was time to explore. I will never forget the climb to the top of the Eiffel Tower – what an experience! Paris is such a beautiful city and I am thankful for having traveled there. I have two specific memories with each of my brothers that keep me laughing to this day. My family was standing in front of the Eiffel Tower admiring its beauty when Micky and I began to tease Nick. Nick became so frustrated that he started running away. The

image of him running through the courtyard is rather funny and while I was laughing, my parents turned for the surprise, and Micky went to chase him. I must say my younger brother experienced some severe sibling torture, but it was all in good fun. The second memory I have is when my parents gave Micky and I fifty euros for lunch. We looked for a sit down restaurant and when we sat down, we took a look at the menu and realized fifty euros was not nearly enough to cover lunch for both of us. We did not know what to do because we had each ordered a cola and when the waiter returned to take our order, we felt pressured. We knew we did not have enough money so we ordered one plate of pasta to share. The waiter left and Micky and I debated if we should leave or stay – we were just kids and completely missed the fact that the restaurant was very expensive. We decided to leave before the plate of pasta was served. We felt so badly. We did not tell our parents of this incident for a couple of years.

The excitement of Paris was watching Lance Armstrong cross the finish line because not only was it an exciting atmosphere, but I could see how happy my dad was. As a family, we explored Europe, saw triumph, appreciated art, tried new foods, and simply grew as a family. I am very open to meeting new people and going to new places – and these are the reasons why. I have come to understand that each person has different priorities, grew up in completely different environments, and may not have the same viewpoints as me. I have come to love traveling and exploring new places.

While I say this now, when I was younger and in Paris, my brothers and I did not have an interest in visiting all of the museums my mom and dad wanted to see.

There were times I gave up the opportunity to walk around museums, but the playgrounds in Paris were so much fun. My brothers and I never ran out of ideas of games to play at the parks. The three of us always had a great time and if anyone can make me laugh the most, Micky and Nick will always win the award. We traveled to Paris many times and I plan to return some day. Although I may have missed out on some museums in France, my family and I traveled to Holland where we explored the Anne Frank Museum.

When I was in eighth grade, my Language Arts teacher, Mr. Pope, focused on the Holocaust. The trip I made with my family to Holland and to the Anne Frank Museum really meant a lot to me. I had studied the genocide and the story of Anne Frank. Seeing where Anne and her family hid and how she lived was an experience that I will never forget. Holland is a beautiful country and the architecture is extraordinary. This trip in particular was special because my parents knew that I could not attend my end of the year, eighth grade trip, which was to the same location. I may have not explored Holland with my friends from school, but traveling with my family was a wonderful experience and I would not have had it any other way.

The moments in my mind of my brothers and me are precious and unforgettable. The same can certainly be said for the beauty, culture, and people from the countries I have visited. From 'Painter Square' in Paris to the Anne Frank Museum in Holland, to the biggest movie theater screen I have ever seen located in Luxembourg, to the Czech Republic's phenomenal architecture, I have seen truly amazing things.

Essay 3

Change can be very scary, but for me, change was my whole life. I constantly moved back and forth between the United States and Europe with my family and I loved every moment of it. While changes of environment became easy for me, I had always been in small rather than large school buildings. When my parents informed me that after I completed eighth grade in Germany, we would be returning to the United States and living in the state of New Jersey, I was hesitant. I remember thinking that I would be in my first non-military, public school. I was also going to begin high school and that thought alone was terrifying. The population of the high school I would be attending was approximately three times as large as the school I was presently attending. The scariest part about this change was that I knew the majority of the students would have grown up in New Jersey and would already have their group of friends. I was going to be the “new girl” in a place where people did not completely understand that I had moved many times in my childhood. My lifestyle and the lifestyle of those who would be surrounding me were completely opposite.

When my mom took my older brother, Micky, and me to the high school to register for classes, I was nervous because I knew I would be coming into a completely new curriculum and I had no idea what to expect. My other concern was whether or not Northern Burlington High School had a dance team. It turned out there was no dance team, but there was a cheerleading team. I had never cheered before but I found a flyer that gave a date, time, and location for the first meeting, as there were no formal try-outs.

Through cheering I met really nice girls, but outside of practice and football games I never saw them. I did enjoy myself though. I never thought cheering was a sport I could enjoy, but I did. I was able to pick up the choreography quickly, use my height and focus to be a back-spot in stunting, and my years of dancing certainly helped me be a strong performer on the sidelines during football games. One cheer that I will never forget is "First And Ten, Greyhounds Go, Fight, Win!" The school colors were blue, grey, and white. I wore the uniform to school every day we had a home game – it was usually every Friday. I was always a little self conscious about wearing the uniform in my classes, but as the year went on I became more confident and proud to be in the uniform.

Overall freshmen year of high school was okay – not great, but not awful. I spent most of my free time watching Disney Channel, as we did not have this channel when we were in Germany and I absolutely loved Hannah Montana – still do to this day. In the middle of the school year my parents informed me that they wanted to buy their first house, but they wanted to know whether or not I was happy at this school. Essentially, my parents basically told me that they would look for houses in a school district of my choosing – I mean how many kids get this kind of offer? I had heard through a friend at a dance studio that Rancocas Valley (RV) High School had an unbelievable dance team and so I asked my parents if we could look into that district. It turned out that I was right in time for the January clinic where I would learn a dance and be in their annual show. Although I was with girls in middle school, I knew that this would be my chance to show the coach who I was. For the remainder of the school year my brother kindly drove me to captain's practices

every Tuesday and Thursday leading up to try-outs. I remember being extremely nervous because not only had my parents already decided on a house in the RV district, but the team was also very competitive and if I did not make the team, I would have felt very guilty.

When the time came for try-outs, I went through a two-day process. The first day consisted of learning the specific tricks to execute on the second day during the official try-out as well as learning the dance I would also perform on the second day. Sleeping that night was impossible, but I was ready for the try-out. I went in the next day, did the best I could, and it turned out my best was good enough. I was offered a spot on the dance team and I can confidently say that being a member of that team changed my life.

Essay 4

When I began sophomore year of high school, I remember feeling nervous because I, once again, was going to be the new girl. While this was true, I knew that being on the dance team would be really good for me as the practice schedule was very time consuming and I had already become friends with Megan Martin. We had English together that year and that was the class I met some of my best friends, and little did I know, my high school sweetheart. That was the class I also connected with my teacher, Mrs. Tracy Sweeney, and I still keep in touch with her today. Rancocas Valley (RV) High School left me with some of my best memories and I absolutely loved being a student in that community. My most significant memories come from my time on the dance team, my first love, the trip I took to Costa Rica, and senior year.

As a member of the dance team I practiced four days a week, attended a four day summer camp in July, competed in the State Championship annually, and competed in a national competition annually as well. One of the best memories I have is when my team won the National Dance Alliance Championship in the Small Varsity Kick Division. Sitting on the national stage and being announced as the number one team in the country was an unforgettable feeling. All of the hard work had paid off and I finished my last season on the dance team on the biggest stage possible. Wearing the national champion jacket, holding the massive trophy, and being together with my team was an amazing time of my life. This all happened in Orlando, Florida and I know that when I return, all of the feelings and emotions from that day will come

racing back to me. This was a time shared with my best friends and my family, and it is a day I will cherish forever.

Being on a competitive high school dance team was a dream I am very thankful to say I lived. The people I met throughout my three years at RV was something I was also thankful for. One of the wonderful people was my first love, Matthew Pellicore. I met Matthew in my sophomore English class, but it was not until junior year that Matthew and I became friends, and then dated. This relationship was “one for the books.” It was filled with laughter, sincerity, and true love. Although I am no longer with him today, I remain friends with him and his family. He is truly a wonderful person and I am really thankful our paths crossed. Matthew and I have had an up and down relationship for years, but I know that no matter what happens, there will always be a place for him in my heart. We were so young at the time, but as we have grown older we have matured in our own ways and to continue to have him in my life is a gift.

Another gift I was given during my years at RV was the opportunity to travel to Costa Rica. This trip was simply amazing! I experienced a completely new culture, met truly beautiful people, and had the time of my life. This is also the place where I knew I would be “BFF” with Megan Martin and Stephanie Rindosh. Megan And Stephanie remain my friends today and are honestly two of the most caring people I know. I would always joke around and say that the three of us were ‘The Trinity.’ We have supported each other since our junior year of high school and will continue to support each other in the future. A memory that we laugh at now from Costa Rica was our near death experience in the Pacific Ocean. We were all swimming out to

the horizon when all of a sudden the weather turned on us. We all struggled to fight the massive waves, but we did eventually make it back to shore. It was terrifying, but also a learning experience for the three of us and all the others on the trip as well.

This leads me to my next terrifying memory – senior year. This was scary because I knew it was my last year living at home, having fun with high school life, and being surrounded with all the great people I had met. What was exciting about senior year was that it included homecoming, prom, Mr. RV, our senior trip to Disney World, project graduation, and, of course, my dance team winning a national championship. This year brought me countless memories that I carried with me to college. The one person I spent most of my time with that year was Terrell White. This was the same guy I escorted at Mr. RV, attended the prom with, and explored Disney World with. We had an unbelievable amount of fun that year. Saying goodbye to him before he ventured off to Chicago for college was heartbreaking, but I am glad to say that he and I are still friends to this day.

I fortunately have remained friends with several people from high school. I gained wonderful experiences and unforgettable moments. I had the time of my life the last three years before I began college. I am completely thankful my parents decided to move to the Rancocas Valley School District. I absolutely loved my time there. While I experienced a few bumps in the road those three years, I also experienced beautiful times and created memories that will last me a lifetime.

Essay 5

It was the spring of 2010 when I decided to commit the next four years of my life to attending the University of Rhode Island. As September quickly approached, my excitement escalated. I was really looking forward to starting the next chapter of my life – college. I was not scared; I was thrilled! I knew I was ready for a change and although it was sad to say goodbye to my friends and family from New Jersey, the Ocean State would be the start of an amazing adventure, and it truly was. My time as a URI student is when I achieved some of my biggest accomplishments and made genuine relationships with people that would last me a lifetime. Every year was filled with memories and the first of many come from my freshman year.

First, I can fortunately say that I got along very well with my two roommates – Tricia Hctor and Victoria Hathaway. The three of us did not end up spending all of our time together and we did not continue our friendships after freshmen year, but we had a fun time together and managed to live successfully in a tight triple. I personally was not the most social person as a first year student, but I loved my first year here. In one year, I tried out for and made the Ramettes Dance Team, was accepted to be an Orientation Leader, a URI 101 Mentor, and a Resident Advisor.

After having danced for fourteen years, I knew I wanted to continue this passion in college. I had done my research and found out that URI had a dance team – the Ramettes. The try-outs were held on a Wednesday and Thursday in September. I was completely intimidated as there were over fifty girls at the try-outs and the coach made it clear that she only had room for fourteen girls. I knew I was prepared and that all I had to do was be myself, execute the required tricks, and memorize the

audition piece. On the second day I was paired with a girl who was a team member the previous year. This did not exactly help my nerves, but we went in together, showed the judges our skills, and performed the routine. After all the groups had performed, the coach announced the top sixteen girls – my name was called! All I had to do to stand out was to have a strong interview and execute the dance two more times. After all parts of the try-out were completed, all of us had to leave and wait for a phone call. The coach said “if you are called, you will have made the team and if you are not called, thank you for coming. I know each of you want to have a spot on the team this year.” I gripped my phone so tight that night and stared at it until I received a phone call from an unknown number. When I answered the phone, the coach congratulated me and offered me a spot on the team. I, of course, accepted and was so excited I did not know what to do with myself. I immediately called my mom and I was so proud. I knew from that point on I was going to have an unbelievable experience. Although I did not form the greatest of relationships that year with my team members, I absolutely loved the season. Performing on the court at the Ryan Center for the first time was such an honor and a moment I will never forget.

After attending orientation in the summer, I knew I wanted to be one of the super fun and cool orientation leaders. The application came out in the fall and after completing the steps of a group interview, meet and greet, individual interview, and the creation of a thirty second video, in December I was named and met the 2011 OL Team for the upcoming summer. I trained once a week during the spring semester leading me to the best summer I had as an undergraduate student. Being an

orientation leader was an enormous amount of fun and, to this day, I see many of the students I had in my groups around campus. I am so excited to see them and I always ask how they are doing. That summer was extremely rewarding and it was an experience that helped me grow as both a person and a leader.

It was not until the spring that I applied for the URI 101 Mentor and Resident Advisor (RA) positions. For both positions, I went through individual interviews, but I also completed a group interview for the RA position. After having been accepted to both programs, I knew that my sophomore year was going to be another exciting one at URI.

As a URI 101 Mentor, I worked side-by-side with a Kinesiology professor to help transition eleven freshmen students into their first year of college. I learned a lot during my semester as a mentor and I am really thankful I was offered a position in this program. I see my students around campus and I love checking in with them and asking how their classes are going.

Comparing my time as an OL, a mentor, and an RA, being an RA has changed my life the most. I was an RA for three years and through this job I met two of my best friends – Geri Buderwitz and Austin Demers. I learned how to work with people from all walks of life, mediate conflict, manage my time, and be an approachable resource. This job has drowned me in both skills and information and I do not regret for one minute being an RA for all three years.

Sophomore year was a really fun year. I was far more social this year compared to my first year and I began the time of my life with my three best friends (Geri and Austin were previously mentioned and the third is Lisette Dubin). A huge part of my

amazing time spent in Rhode Island is because of Geri, Austin, and Lisette. These three girls supported me during both my most challenging and best times. Words cannot say enough about them. Knowing that after graduation I will not be seeing them every day during office hours, at lunch, at dinner, and at night is terrifying. Geri and I immediately connected through quoting movies and just being silly. Austin actually lived next to me freshmen year, but as previously mentioned, I was not very social so it was not until sophomore year we became great friends. Austin and I have chosen the same major and thus we have taken classes together. We have bonded through late night study sessions and our love for international soccer. Lisette, I also met freshmen year, because she became great friends with Austin. Lisette is truly an awesome person and is extremely humorous. She can always make me laugh and that is one of the favorite qualities she possesses. The four of us know we will be life-long friends and although we have to say goodbye very soon, it is more like "a see you later." The relationships I have built with my three friends are truly beautiful and having them around during my college years was simply wonderful.

Essay 6

The wonderful start to my junior year began with the ending of my sophomore year – being voted and announced as the next Junior Captain of the Ramettes Dance Team. Being a member of a collegiate dance team was a dream on its own, but being the captain of a collegiate dance team was something I thought I might never be able to accomplish. My history of living in many countries was unique and exciting, but it left me without being trained steadily as a dancer. I was rarely the strongest dancer in the room and I had never been in one place enough time to hold a leadership position in a dance community. I knew that my first two years on the dance team would be my opportunity to show my teammates that I could be an awesome leader for them. I worked really hard and, in the end, it certainly paid off. I moved on to be the Senior Captain and I loved every moment of leading a group of twenty girls.

Junior year was definitely my most challenging year – both academically and emotionally. I faced challenges that I wish I did not have to face. A mix of a rigorous academic schedule, being a mentor and role model for students in difficult relationships, and managing the RA and captain positions made the year very challenging. Although I wish I did not have to face the challenges I did, this year made me a stronger person. I truly believe all of the experiences I have had in my past will allow me to overcome any obstacle that comes my way.

Towards the end of junior year, I was feeling very lost because I had no idea what I was going to do for the summer. A research position did not work out and I did not plan for that to happen. I remember being very apprehensive about the upcoming summer. I began searching for any kind of job possible. A friend of mine had

recommended care.com to me. My experience with children was minimal, but I landed myself a live-in nanny position in Southampton, New York. I worked fourteen hours a day and traveled with the family. There were three children: Izzy (six years), Alex (three years), and Paddy (eighteen months). This summer was really challenging – definitely the hardest thing I have ever had to do. I learned so much and looking back I am glad I did it. There were times I thought they would let me go, times I thought I would have to let myself go, and I certainly did not think I would make it to California with them for my last week, but I did. When it came time to say goodbye to the three children, it was not easy and even though I thought the summer was pretty rough, their mom invited me back the next summer. I guess I was not as bad of a nanny as I thought. So after making a ridiculous amount of Hampton's money, it was time to begin my last year at URI.

This past year has been really great. I attended a summer camp with my dance team and we did superior work, I turned twenty-one, I danced my last performances as a Ramette, I completed my third year as an RA, I traveled to Virginia with my team to support the women's basketball team, I completed research with Dr. Michael McGregor in Organic Chemistry, I began my medical school application, and I experienced amazing times with my friends. Everything that has happened since last August has made it that much harder to graduate. While I am ready to take the next steps in my life and begin another chapter, I really have loved my years at the University of Rhode Island.

Geri, Lisette, Austin, Alex, and Colin have made this year hilarious, fun, and fantastic! From late night Kabuki meals to trips to the Providence Mall to nights out at local

bars, burger nights at the Mews, and so much more, I have enjoyed my time with all of them. I know I will keep in touch with these five people after graduation, but I do get upset when I think about how little time we have left together at URI.

My past four years of college were filled with success and failure, good times and bad times, and countless memories. I learned from all of my experiences, bounced back after having been knocked down, and most importantly, I became the person I am today.

For years I have wanted to go to medical school. That is what I have been working toward for all of these years. While this is true, I knew that I wanted to do a service program after I graduated. I wanted to take an opportunity to see life in a different way before I would potentially devote my life to medicine. After researching various organizations and listening to professors mention different post-graduate paths, I decided to apply for Teach For America. This organization really stood out to me because I am a true believer of equal opportunity, especially when it comes to education. I believe every child, regardless of race or socioeconomic status, deserves an excellent education. This program required an online application that I submitted at the end of January. I was then notified I had made it to the phone interview/online activity round. After completing both portions of the application, I was invited to the daylong final interview. I prepared a lesson, engaged in a group activity, and met one-on-one for an individual interview. Two weeks after I completed my application, I was notified on March 13, 2014 of my acceptance to Teach For America! I was specifically chosen to teach in the New York City region. I was so excited and so proud I cried. I was alone when I read my admission status,

but I made several phone calls and sent texts to all who supported me. Everything I worked for and became a part of at the University of Rhode Island allowed me to qualify for this wonderful program. While I am very sad to see my undergraduate career come to an end, I am also very excited to venture off to New York City to teach for two years. With my college chapter ending, my real world chapter begins.

Summary

Being able to tell a story well and in writing is a difficult task. Completion of my Senior Honors Project allowed me to significantly improve on this writing style. My sponsor, Barbara Conti, and I met throughout the semester to combine our ideas for my project, to edit and critique my writing, and to have fun doing so! I was able to reflect on my educational experiences from first grade through college years and write about them. Looking at pictures and selecting them to accompany the writing was also fun. Professor Conti and I had no problem on deciding which pictures to use for my final poster board presentation. In the end everything flowed beautifully. I was proud of the work I had completed and thankful for the professor I had the pleasure of working with. This experience was an unforgettable one and I can carry my final essays with me for the rest of my life.

This project was especially exhilarating for me because I had the chance to open my mind to a completely new field. As a science major, I was constantly writing research papers and lab reports, but exploring retrospective writing was thrilling! Writing six essays to tell my journey was a wonderful accomplishment because I grew both as a person and as a writer.

I took a leap and did something I had always wanted to do. There are no regrets in choosing the project I did. If anything, I think I might try and continue this project into my future. My work has inspired me to begin a post-graduate blog to carry on my journey in writing. Overall, I believe my Senior Honors Project was a success and I loved every moment of it.