

BACKSTORY

Anne Humphries Arseneau '89, M.Ed. '92

~ Associate Director of Student Activities

Hometown: Arlington, Va.

Family: Husband Bob and two Jack Russell terriers, Pharis and Gidget

Why did you come to William and Mary? In the third grade, I knew I wanted to come to William and Mary when my sister started her freshman year. I applied to William and Mary early decision: it was where I wanted to be.

How does your time here as an English major and in Kappa Alpha Theta inform your career? I had a great group of friends and sisters. We sat on the steps of Tucker for hours and solved the problems of the world while we were taking study breaks. My position didn't exist then and I am doing what I do because of how powerful my undergraduate experience was.

What did you do after graduation? I worked for Kappa Alpha Theta as one of their leadership consultants and then I came back for a master's degree in secondary education. I was the head resident of Sorority Court for two years, at the same time working on my master's. It was February of my second semester when Vice President Sadler said, "You should really think about student affairs." So I ended up working in residence life for two years at DePauw University in Greencastle, Ind., and then went to work for LeaderShape, which is a nonprofit organization that provides ethics-based leadership development programs. I came to William and Mary in 1997 when they created a version of my current position.

What's good about the W&M fraternity and sorority community? There's no better community, in my opinion, to be able to work with. I feel blessed every day to work with the caliber of students that I'm working with in Greek life and that hasn't changed at all. And there's something special about working at the birthplace of the fraternity and sorority experience and something special about working at your own institution.

How do you respond to the challenges in Greek life? I think I've got a really good sense of humor. I am pretty resilient. At 12 years advising fraternities and sororities professionally, I am old in the world of fraternity and sorority advisors. Part of what helps me is that I just really enjoy the process of watching people problem-solve and try to work on whatever is at hand right now.

Your Christmas cards are legendary; how did that get started? The first one was probably in 1994 — Pharis, the oldest dog, on a surfboard in a Santa suit, like he's looking longingly out to sea. I'm a little bit freakishly high-energy and compulsive. You can imagine that if we don't have an idea by October, we know we don't have an idea.

Interview by Ben Kennedy '05



PHOTO: STEPHEN SALPUKAS AT THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY