

*Monmouth Memories*

Monmouth Memories Oral History Interview

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Interviewee: Hannah Najafi

Interviewer/Transcriber: Emily Pascali, Monmouth University Student

Hannah Najafi is a current junior at Monmouth University. She is an accounting major and is involved in the Phi Eta Sigma honor society as well as the Accounting Society on campus. Hannah also works on campus at the Cashier's Office, located in Wilson Hall. Hannah says that her greatest accomplishment so far is that she is now the current president of Phi Sigma Sigma at Monmouth University.

Hannah comes from a very diverse background. Her mother was born and raised in Puerto Rico and English is her second language. Her father was born and raised in Iran and English is his second language as well. Both of her parents came to America in their early 20s and have since established businesses and hold very important positions within companies. For Hannah, growing up with two foreign parents was quite interesting. She explains how she did not really grasp either language because English was the way her parents communicated with each other. Hannah considers her and her older brother to be Americanized. As for some cultural traditions, Hannah does celebrate Persian New Year in March.

Hannah grew up in Jefferson, New Jersey and has family all over the state and country as well as in other countries. Growing up, Hannah played many sports and was very active. In her senior year of High School, she was named Varsity Captain of her lacrosse team. This was just the beginning of the leadership roles that Hannah would take on.

When it came to looking for colleges, Hannah was instantly drawn to Monmouth. Although she applied elsewhere, she had her heart set on Monmouth. When asked what drew her here, her answer was quite typical of many Monmouth students: "the beautiful campus." Other

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than the beauty, Hannah was intrigued by the business program, which seemed to be small enough for specialized learning, but also big enough to make connections. Hannah was also impressed by how many services were available to students, such as the writing center and tutoring center (among others). The small class size was also a big selling point because it was vastly different than the huge lecture halls she had visited previously. The location also drew Hannah to Monmouth. Being somewhat close to home and so close to the beach seemed ideal. She also thought the residence halls were also a lot nicer than other schools.

Hannah currently lives off campus, but resided for two years in both traditional and suite style dorms. She describes the experience as a great way to meet people and get involved. Working on campus has also been extremely beneficial for Hannah. Being that she is a federal work study student, the student employment office set her up with a job at the Cashier's Office, working with the Bursar. Hannah has made many connections through this job and has also been lucky enough to receive firsthand experience with situations she will eventually deal with in her career field. Hannah has worked there for three years and considers herself lucky to have a job that coordinates with her major.

This past December, Hannah was elected President of her sorority. After holding the executive position of sorority Bursar, opting for more responsibility seemed like the next step. Hannah talked a lot about Greek Life in our interview, and considers it one of the best parts of her college experience here at Monmouth. She explains how being a part of Greek life means you are a part of something bigger. She feels that the university supports Greek organizations and so do the surrounding communities. Her sorority, as well as all other Greek organizations on campus, consider volunteer work and philanthropic events to be the heart of Greek life. Giving back to the community and fundraising are everyday ideals that raise thousands of dollars a year

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for charities and outreach programs. Although sororities and fraternities can be portrayed rather negatively in the media, Hannah believes that Monmouth Greeks uphold a great reputation defined by their philanthropic work, tight knit community, and unity amongst each other. Overall, Hannah feels that the friendships and connections that are made through Greek organizations are a great tool when it comes to professional networking as well as personal connections. As President, Hannah hopes to leave her chapter inspired and ready to continue the legacy and reputation of Phi Sigma Sigma. By the time she graduates, she hopes to leave her chapter in an even better condition than which she found it. Hannah is excited to work with her chapter as well as other organizations and keep Greek life flourishing at Monmouth.

Hannah considers her favorite “Monmouth Memory” to be joining a sorority and meeting many friends and really enjoying herself. As a junior, some advice Hannah gave was to just enjoy it. She advises freshman and incoming students to take everything in and try to experience everything Monmouth has to offer. While doing so, she urges students not to sweat the small stuff, because eventually everything works out the way it’s supposed to and the journey is the best part.