

Molly Swietek, B.A. English, Literature, 1999

By Olivia Alsup

Director of Public Relations and Grants, Life Works

“I have never known any limitation of what you can do with an English degree. You can do anything.”

Molly Swietek graduated from Western Kentucky University in 1999 with a B.A. in English Literature and a minor in Creative Writing. Although she initially began her education at Transylvania University, Swietek transferred during her Sophomore year after seeing all of the opportunities WKU had to offer.



During her time at WKU, Swietek had the opportunity to study abroad in Cambridge, England for a semester. Swietek values her time spent in WKU English because of the connections she formed within the department. “The professors, faculty, and staff of the English Department were amazing and supportive. It was really like a family.”

Upon her graduation, Swietek worked as an investment associate at an investment firm before switching career paths and focusing more on non-profit work. She worked in non-profit management for her family’s startup foundation in Georgia. Swietek then worked in journalism before moving to Tennessee and completing a Master of Arts in English from Tennessee Tech University. There, she worked as writer for a publishing and advertising firm and taught college classes as a Graduate student.

After moving throughout the South, Swietek found herself back at WKU when she applied for a job in the Office of Sponsored Programs. As an Associate Director, she led trainings, held presentations, and developed proposals to secure funding from Federal or private organizations for the University. Swietek then worked as the Development Manager for [WKU Public Broadcasting](#) where she focused on outreach, communication, public relations, and fund raising. In this position, she had the opportunity to help develop the Brinkley Student Employment Fellowship, a program that invites college students on the Autism Spectrum to apply for student employment at WKU Public Broadcasting.

Currently, Swietek is the Director of Public Relations and Grants at [LifeWorks at WKU](#), a residential work and independent living program for young adults on the Autism Spectrum established in 2019. Because LifeWorks is a relatively new program, most of the work Swietek currently does involves establishing an online presence and building partnerships with businesses and organizations in the community. She writes grants, does fundraising, and creates promotional materials explaining what LifeWorks is and what services they offer.

Through her experience with the Brinkley Student Employment Fellowship and the work she does at LifeWorks, Swietek feels that she has found what she wants to do for the rest of her life. “I feel so passionate about using the skills I have developed over the years to help further these individuals’ dreams,” Swietek adds. “To have experiences exploring different jobs, finding that perfect career, and being able to support themselves through life; that is truly my biggest passion right now.”

Swietek believes that she uses the skills she developed as an English major still help her in her career today. “The ability to read and interpret texts, to effectively communicate written and orally, and the ability to make connections with people have all played integral roles in any job I’ve ever had.”

Swietek encourages English majors to get involved in the English Department during their time at WKU. “Become part of that family. Don’t just be a student that comes through and checks off the requirements for the degree-- be a participant.” Swietek also advises undergraduates to never be discouraged from pursuing an English degree. “I had so many years of people saying to me, ‘You’re an English major. Well, what are you going to do with that?’ Anything and everything.”

