

William Williford is currently pursuing a M.A. English Literature degree at WKU and a J.D. law degree in Nashville. William was instilled with a love for literature and reading at a young age and has taken every opportunity to further himself in the field. He says, **“Being an English major challenges you to push yourself in many ways that you might not expect. It pushes you to tackle difficult issues and confront the harsh realities of life.”**

William was raised in a home that valued the importance of books and the lessons that they can teach. His love for reading was encouraged by his mother and grandparents, and he credits his grandfather for introducing him to the works of Mark Twain, the most influential writer in William’s life. When he first came to WKU he majored in Political Science and minored in English. After graduation, he enlisted in the United States Army and completed seven years of active duty. During his time in Afghanistan, William wrote and published his war poem “Heat, Dust, and Time.”

After leaving the Army, William knew that he wanted to go to law school; however, he felt unprepared after being out of school for so long. In order to prepare, he decided to return to WKU to get his B.A. in English. After that, he decided to get his M.A. in English along with his J.D. law degree. **“Being a lawyer requires incredible dedication. The curriculum is rigorous, and the demands and standards are high. Additionally, more times than not, someone’s liberty or financial freedom is on the line. Being able to communicate their case well via written and spoken language is a**

must. I took all of this into consideration when deciding to continue my English education.”

William has certainly learned a lot through his undergraduate and graduate pursuits and knows the value that being an English major has. **“A degree in English is both useful and versatile.** Completing a degree in English will furnish its recipient with the skill set to read large amounts of text in a short time while still maintaining an analytical eye. Additionally, an English degree will assist in one’s writing and research skills. As if those things weren’t enough to pursue this route, an English degree will train the holder to better and more effectively communicate with different people in different ways.”

One piece of advice that William has for other English students is to read everything that is assigned to you. **“No matter how busy or behind you get, don’t stop reading.”** However, the most important advice that William has is to foster relationships with the department’s faculty and staff. William cites Dr. Logan, Dr. Berry, Dr. Hughes, and Dr. Reames as some of his greatest mentors. **“In the time that I have spent in Cherry Hall, I have never been turned down for any help or assistance that I have sought from anyone. Having unfettered access to leaders in the field cannot be overstated and undervalued. Get to know your professors, you’ll be all the better for it.”**