

EARLY COLLEGE FOR ME



In her own words...

Ashley Watters

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Southern Maine Community College

"It wasn't hard at all to stay on track with my major. I put so much thought into it ahead of time that when I started classes, all I had to worry about was learning.

"I took summer courses to stay on track for graduation, and I am so thankful I made that decision! What helped me the most to graduate on time [in two years] were the resources available, including Early College for ME, my advisors, the learning commons, and the additional staff on campus. I and every other student on campus have a tremendous amount of resources, but to take advantage of them is up to us students!

"I felt comfortable right away on campus. The staff is very helpful and the students are amiable. Being a work-study student in the IT department gave me a more 'at home' feeling on campus than the average student because I spent so much time here and around the people who make up this community. If any student is looking for a job, I suggest looking for a work-study position because it allows you to feel connected with the campus.

"Early College for ME was the most important factor in making me feel at home at SMCC. This program allowed me to start college while in high school. Therefore, I had the ability to get familiar with the new learning experience, the staff, and the students, early. When it came time for the full-time semester, I had no surprises.

"Stay ahead of the game. Don't expect to be successful without putting in work, and if you are going to put work into your education, do it early. For example, if you plan on transferring, decide which classes you need to take here and what classes you need to take when you transfer. Save yourself time and money by taking classes that will transfer. If you have free electives, take the classes you will need at the next college to complete your degree.

"After graduation I plan on coming back to SMCC to graduate with an associate degree in nursing. Because I planned ahead, I only need to take the four nursing courses and two other minor classes. After my associate degree, I will transfer to USM and get my bachelor's degree in nursing, work as a Registered Nurse for roughly a year, and then go back to school to get my master's in nursing. Shortly after, I hope to be teaching nursing students!"