

William & Mary Charles Center Honors Fellowship Alumni Profiles

00:05 [Danny Greene, Class of 2012] I'm a third-generation Richmond Public

00:07 School teacher my grandmother taught

00:09 in Richmond Public Schools my mother is a

00:11 current principal they both were

00:12 elementary school I like the bigger kids

00:15 I'm a seventh-grade teacher social

00:18 studies at Lucille Brown Middle School

00:21 in Richmond Public Schools and my

00:23 students it's an inner-city school

00:25 so they're urban students predominantly

00:29 African-American and Latino I teach U.S.

00:32 history which is what fascinates me yeah

00:35 so I can get really and get into it it's

00:38 1865 to present so anything after the

00:40 Civil War until now really that's what

00:43 we get to discuss I'm really passionate

00:45 about teaching because I think you have

00:46 to start somewhere I think it's a

00:49 frustration of mine that in a lot of

00:52 people's minds teachers aren't

00:53 necessarily professionals but without

00:57 teachers we wouldn't have whatever

01:00 else you would consider to be a

01:02 professional I'm passionate about it

01:04 because somebody has to do it and why

01:07 not myself why not me my honors

01:11 fellowship was completely about
01:15 education so I did tons of research just
01:18 on my own in terms of looking up the
01:22 best practices how schools are helping
01:26 students succeed or in ways not helping
01:28 students succeed so it gave me a wide
01:33 array of research first and foremost
01:35 that I don't think that I would have
01:37 looked at otherwise I'm very proud of my
01:40 writing and I love to edit papers and do
01:42 things like that just my confidence and
01:44 what I can produce has gone up because I
01:48 have this product that I can show to
01:50 anyone that I'm very proud of I think
01:52 without an honors thesis I don't know if
01:55 I would be teaching because I don't know
01:57 if I would have felt the pressure to
01:58 make the decision
01:59 I probably would have just applied to
02:02 grad schools or I don't know what I
02:05 would have done but until I had that
02:08 those you know guiding forces and I
02:10 just didn't make a decision without the
02:12 donors I don't know if I would have been
02:15 able to do it in the first place so even
02:18 if I had had the opportunity to I
02:19 wouldn't have been able to fund all the
02:21 research and be able to get into all of

02:24 the different places um in terms of like
02:27 libraries and you know the Library of
02:29 Congress and I'd stayed over the summer
02:32 and did research but without that
02:35 additional money to help me stay there
02:37 with housing and I was college student I
02:39 didn't have the money for that um I
02:42 probably wouldn't have been able to do
02:44 it on the scale that I did I can't say
02:48 that I want to be a teacher forever do I
02:50 want to leave education no but for right
02:53 now I guess the next five or so years
02:56 I'll probably still be in room 410 but I
02:59 don't think that's the end of the line
03:01 for me I'm really into education reform
03:05 and that's something that did come out
03:06 of my honors thesis is seeing okay not
03:09 it's not good enough to say that we have
03:12 problems we have to find solutions to
03:13 these problems and I think the
03:15 performers need to be people who were in
03:17 the classroom to begin with I think all
03:20 too often we have people who try to make
03:21 change and try to make decisions about
03:23 education but have never spent any time
03:25 behind a teacher's desk they remember
03:27 being the student but they don't
03:29 understand the complexities of being the

03:30 teacher and so I think that's something
03:33 that I really want to do in terms of
03:35 advocacy my reach only goes but so far
03:39 and so I think when I decide that I'm--
03:44 happy with teaching I'm good with what
03:47 I've done with in room 410 and I think
03:50 I'm going to move on to something bigger
03:51 in education so I can move outside of
03:54 just the four walls of my classroom

03:59 [Holly Blackburn, Class of 2013] My project was on sea stars and time to
04:03 metamorphosis and how the maternal
04:07 investment in an egg impacts their
04:09 development I went to Maine to do my
04:14 research because there's a great marine
04:16 lab out there we were able to do a more
04:18 extensive project than we could do
04:21 at William and Mary we were able to go collect
04:23 all of our animals right there instead
04:25 of having to order them and ship them in
04:26 the larvae I was working with were they're
04:29 very finicky so we had a lot of problems
04:32 with them not surviving in the plastic
04:34 ware that we had so through the funding
04:36 I was able to get new glassware
04:38 that was specific for the actual project
04:41 that I was doing and for those larvae so
04:42 we had a much higher survival rates I

04:45 would not have been able to get that
04:48 type of equipment that was just
04:50 completely essential to my project
04:52 without the funding I was debating
04:55 between going to a Ph.D. program and
04:58 going to an M.D. program and I loved
05:01 research I love bench research and I was
05:03 very happy with what I was doing but I
05:07 just I wanted to have that extra aspect
05:10 of patient interaction in the past
05:13 couple weeks we've been practicing our
05:15 basic skills like blood pressure and
05:18 heart rate and different reflexes and
05:20 stuff that we all practice on each other
05:21 in small group settings it's very like
05:24 thrilling to be able to just apply the
05:26 book knowledge that we have to real life
05:29 every student gets assigned a community
05:34 service project that they do for one
05:36 semester and so my assignment is JABA
05:38 which is the Jefferson Area Board for
05:41 Aging and I just go once a week and just
05:44 spend some time with the elderly
05:46 patients a lot of them have dementia or
05:49 other you know mental problems that
05:51 they're dealing with right now a lot of
05:53 it's just a social aspect just being
05:55 there with them and you know showing

05:57 them that people care about them I like
05:59 leaving feeling very fulfilled that I've
06:03 done something that day to brighten
06:06 somebody's day and you know given back
06:09 in some small way going through the
06:13 rigorous process of writing a thesis has
06:16 really helped me in terms of
06:17 understanding how to write science work
06:20 and how to read science and it's made me
06:25 a much better writer so I really
06:28 appreciate that of course I give a lot
06:30 of credit to my advisor for that because
06:32 he really pushed me to you know keep
06:35 making my pieces better and better and I
06:38 think that really helps me with the
06:40 career path I chose now because I spend
06:43 a lot of time understanding how to do
06:47 primary literature research which
06:49 applies in all science fields because of
06:53 the honors project I did a lot of
06:55 presentations with the work I did at
06:58 some conferences and some just at
07:00 William and Mary with other professors
07:03 learning how to explain your work and
07:07 why it's important I feel like that's a
07:08 really great skill that all people in
07:11 the science field need to learn and a
07:14 lot of times research like that isn't

07:16 possible without the funding it just it

07:20 just isn't and and especially the honors

07:25 project I feel like it's really great

07:26 because it it forces you to do a very

07:28 intense research project and and and

07:32 follow up with it and do that science

07:35 writing and learn how to search through

07:39 primary literature and those are those

07:42 are also skills that you might not

07:43 necessarily acquire or acquire as

07:47 in-depth if you don't do the honors

07:49 project

07:53 [Sarah Young, Class of 2013] My honors fellowship at William and Mary

08:00 allowed me to do original research on a

08:03 topic that I was passionate about so my

08:06 research was on agricultural runoff and

08:08 how its impacted and interacted with

08:11 forested riparian buffers and indirectly

08:13 how that pollution went to the

08:14 Chesapeake Bay and impacted that

08:17 watershed so it's an environmental issue

08:19 that I was very passionate about so the

08:21 honors fellowship allowed me to do

08:22 research on that and honors fellowship

08:24 also allowed me to attend a professional

08:27 conference for the Geological Society of

08:29 America where I was able to present my

08:31 research in a professional setting to

08:33 scientists from around the country at
08:35 that point I've really realized that I
08:37 also have a passion for education and
08:40 teaching others that may or may not have
08:42 prior knowledge about different
08:43 environmental issues so I also took that
08:46 here to Disney's Animal Kingdom and I'm
08:48 really glad that I can utilize my degree
08:52 and tell other people about science but
08:54 I'm at the same time be kind of talking
08:56 about science all the time my role here
09:00 at Disney's Animal Kingdom is as a
09:01 conservation education presenter which
09:04 means that I'm a troop leader for our
09:05 wilderness explorers program the program
09:08 is brand new just started in June but
09:10 guests receive a handbook and they can
09:13 do different badges around the park by
09:15 doing different activities and learning
09:16 about our animals as a troop leader I
09:19 staff eight of those locations to earn
09:21 those badges as well as staffing
09:23 different animal locations throughout
09:24 the park so the point of the program
09:27 kind of the purpose is to engage guests
09:29 with our animals with animals that they
09:31 maybe have never heard of or seen before
09:33 and inspire them towards conservation

09:35 action at home though if you ask any
09:38 child what their least favorite subject
09:39 in school is they're probably going to
09:41 say math or science and as a scientist
09:44 that really breaks my heart because
09:45 science is the study of the natural
09:47 world the world around us
09:49 and I think it's very important to
09:50 foster an appreciation for the
09:53 environment in the natural world in both
09:55 children and adults kind of my favorite
09:57 thing as well is when I'm talking to a
09:59 kid and they're jumping up and down from
10:01 excitement about what I'm talking to
10:02 them about and when they're done when
10:04 they receive their badge they run up to
10:06 their parents and say mom dad look at
10:08 how cool these tigers are look at how I
10:10 can help these tigers out in the wild
10:12 like let's go do it right now and their
10:14 parents are like we still have like four
10:16 days in our vacation but when we go home
10:18 we'll do it so it's really neat to see
10:20 that kind of inspiration right away that
10:23 that child is so excited and so excited
10:26 about how they can help solve
10:27 environmental issues at home during my
10:29 honors fellowship and doing my pieces I

10:31 really strengthened my communication
10:33 skills with other scientists by
10:36 presenting my research at a professional
10:38 conference as well as with my advisor
10:40 who I worked very closely with on my
10:42 research um in addition I also kind of
10:45 learned how to work independently doing
10:48 that research and those are skills that
10:49 I've definitely transferred here to my
10:51 current role as an educator animal
10:53 kingdom I have to work daily with 29
10:56 other educators on my team at the
10:59 different locations so that teamwork
11:01 piece and communication has really come
11:02 into play here in my current role but in
11:05 addition to that I have to work
11:06 independently and make decisions based
11:08 on current situations at the different
11:10 locations as well so after I'm done with
11:13 this current internship here at animal
11:15 kingdom I'll be going over to the seas
11:17 I'm at Epcot to be a conservation
11:19 education instructor over there for next
11:21 semester after that I'll be an excursion
11:24 guide for one of our premium guest
11:25 experiences called wild Africa trek so
11:28 coming back over to animal kingdom wild
11:30 Africa trek is an experience where

11:32 guests get a personal tour around our
11:33 savannah and are more personally
11:35 connected with the animals on that
11:37 attraction so the purpose of that is
11:40 kind of to also inspire conservation
11:42 action just like I am as a troop leader
11:44 here after my time at Disney I'm hoping
11:47 to go to graduate school to get a
11:48 Master's in museum education I think the
11:51 honor scholarship program at William and
11:52 Mary is very important
11:54 is it allows students to delve deeper
11:57 into a passion that they have in their
11:59 respective field it allows them to get
12:01 experience in original research and
12:03 allows them to go to professional
12:05 meetings and do things that they may be
12:06 otherwise wouldn't be able to do I think
12:09 that's so important because all of these
12:10 students are very passionate about their
12:12 subject and it allows them to try to
12:14 make a difference in the world through
12:15 their research