

FEATURES

Delco's Basketball Beauty Queen

By Amanda Ponzar
Lion's Eye Staff Writer

As a first-degree black belt, former Miss Delaware and model, and exceptional athlete, Laurie Jean "LJ" Lucidonio is adding one more accomplishment to her resume: a college degree.

As a non-traditional student in her thirties, Lucidonio returned to Penn State Delco just two years ago because of her Aunt's influence. "My Aunt Margaret said you should always be able to take care of yourself," said Lucidonio, and she has taken that to heart.

Lucidonio's current GPA hovers around a 4.0. "In the last three semesters, I got one A minus," she admits. Just recently Lucidonio switched her major to communications; she hopes to work in public relations. Considering her track record, that goal - and anything else she undertakes - is as good as done.

This single superstar lives with four cats, whom she affectionately calls her "kids," and also spends time with her nieces, "the loves of my life," who cheer her on at Delco basketball games. Most

players on the team call her "mom," except for "the ones I'm really tight with. They call me 'L.'" Although Delco's first three games are away, the team will be playing on Monday, November 22, at 6 pm, for their first home game against Philadelphia Community College.

Most women's fantasy is Lucidonio's reality: she represented Delaware in the Miss USA pageant. It began at the state level when Lucidonio borrowed a friend's dress - that was two sizes too big - and became the first runner up in the 1991 Miss Delaware Competition. Lucidonio had her usual good luck and the opportunity of a lifetime, when three weeks before the national pageant, the state winner was disqualified for not being a legitimate Delaware resident. Suddenly, Lucidonio was on her way to the Miss USA pageant. She didn't have to look far for a sponsor. Her sister, Jennifer, provided funding for the full amount of \$2,000. "Jennifer is everything," said Lucidonio.

Held during Desert Storm, the pageant was "a very patriotic time," with representatives from 50 states gathered together, singing the National anthem. "I

was proud to be an American," said Lucidonio. Although she did not place in the national pageant, the best part for Lucidonio was participating in the Miss USA/USO tour which took a team to entertain military troops permanently stationed in far off places like Iceland.

Lucidonio is also an assistant karate instructor and first-degree black belt. Karate helps "to take control of your life if it's out of control," said Lucidonio. When she's in an uncomfortable situation, she is not afraid to use her skills. "People test me, and then they're sorry. I take it very seriously," said Lucidonio. "You have to know what you want. People aren't mind readers." And if anyone knows what she wants and how to get it, it's Lucidonio.

Lucidonio recently celebrated her 35th birthday. Instead of feeling dissatisfied, she is pleased with her past and anticipates even better things in the future. Everyone she meets tells Lucidonio that she's done more things in her 35 years than most people have in a lifetime. She is surprised. "I'm not even started yet! I have miles to go before I sleep. I want to have a purpose. I want to make a difference...I'm a global person."



"LJ" Lucidonio represented the State of Delaware in the 1991 Miss USA Pageant.

Real Life Learning Adventures

By Aleyce Wolff
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You are locked-up all day, or what seems to be all day, inside. The only time you get to experience a cool breeze or a change in scenery is when you are walking to a different building for another class. Wouldn't it be nice to get out of the classroom and into a real life experience? At Delco many teachers encourage and sometimes require students to participate in learning adventures outside of the classroom. These adventures expose students to possible careers and also help to expand each student's learning experience. Co-Curricular adventures in the current fall semester have been quite varied.

Students in Mary Gergen's honors psychology class went to Glen Mills School. The students were exposed to a

school of over 1,000 juvenile offenders. Gergen said, "We tried to discover the 'psychology' that allows for [these] ... boys ... to become model citizens, who don't spit, swear or walk on the grass in a totally open campus setting."

In Pat Hillen's honors English 30 class, students went to New York to see *Death of a Salesman*. Students got a chance to experience a Broadway play, which increased their cultural awareness.

Students in Paul Greene's Music 9 class and students in Norma Notzold's FYS class went to New York City. They visited the United Nations, Soho museums and galleries, and Chinatown. Greene's music class learned how the United Nations promotes world peace. Notzold's FYS class focused on career opportunities in the international scene. Notzold said, "This trip enhanced and

expanded the students' information."

Some of her FYS students are also participating in job shadowing, which requires students to follow around for a day a career person of their interest and to report on their experiences.

Students in Cynthia Lightfoot's HDFS 311 classes spent a total of 25 hours in daycare centers, schools, and service agencies. They explored possible careers with children and their families.

In Patricia Van Leuvan's Urban Education 403 class, students have visited the J. Hienz Wildlife Refuge in Tinicum. After an orientation, the students completed "Project Wet." Where they worked in teams to create a lesson involving water. The goal is to be able to use the knowledge and skills they learned to teach their future students.

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"LJ" as assistant karate instructor and first degree blackbelt.

Internships Enhance Employment Prospects

By Amanda Ponzar
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Unless you're born into wealth with a secure top-level position at daddy's multi-million dollar company, the best way to land a job is to get practical experience in the professional world. One of the easiest ways to do this is to take advantage of Delco's growing number of internship opportunities. While receiving credits, students gain career and major related experience and connections. "Students learn to relate classroom theory to business situations," said Carol Minski, Internship Coordinator.

Internships greatly enhance future employment prospects as well as help students acquire professional identities. Internships also provide a good opportunity to test the job waters before plunging in on graduation day when a job is no longer an option but a necessity. Accountant Jeff Watson completed an internship with his current employer, the Society of Financial Service Professionals. "The thing I enjoyed most

was working with my internship supervisor, Bob Titus. Bob was very instructive in helping me accomplish my academic goals and the Society's goals," said Watson. For Watson, who worked full time while completing his internship, "The biggest challenge was trying to get my internship work, both for the Society and Penn State, done while still completing my accounting tasks." Watson is glad he did the internship, but admits "I was very relieved after I completed it."

Another intern, advertising and public relations major Stephanie Ent, worked in the Media Theater's public relations department last summer. "I wrote press releases for the upcoming shows and events which taught me a lot about communicating with the press and how vital it is to have strong communications with them," said Ent. An invaluable experience, her internship helped clarify her career goals. "I learned a lot about public relations from this internship. It made me realize that this is the major that I want to be in. I learned strong

communication skills, people skills, and also editing skills through this internship that will help me in the future."

When compared to internship programs at other Penn State campuses, "We're really out there in the forefront at Delco," said Carol Minski, Internship Coordinator.

Recognizing students' financial obligations, many employers also offer stipends or wages. Although enjoyable and a good way to build connections and sometimes make a little money, internships are not just fun and games. They require hard work in the "real" world. Employers are less likely than professors to overlook tardy students whose dog/cat/hamster ate their work.

Internships are available to sophomores, juniors and seniors in 295, 395 and 495 level courses. To qualify, students must have at least a 2.3 CGPA and be able to work 10-12 hours per week. Each student must have a faculty liaison who approves the internship beforehand and agrees to monitor progress. Each intern must also keep a

journal summarizing professional activities, experiences, and insights. The faculty liaison will review this journal and meet with the student to discuss progress. Interested students can pick up an internship informational packet, available in the Career Development Center, second floor Commons Building.

Student Internships are available in:

- Art & Art History
- Business Administration
- Business Liberal Arts & Sciences
- Communications & Media Studies
- Computer Applications
- Education
- English
- Government
- Graphic Arts
- Health Administration
- Human Development & Family Studies
- Information & Science Technology
- Management
- Marketing
- Social Services
- Speech Communication