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Mentorship experience helps lead alumnae to Georgetown

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Mentorship experience helps lead alumnae to Georgetown

When Adrienne Formentos '10 graduated Cum Laude and Pi Sigma Alpha as a double major in Political Science and English, her working relationship with academic adviser Gigi Gokcek did not end.

Five years later, Adrienne has chosen Georgetown University over Boston University and five other colleges to enter graduate school and Gokcek, associate professor in [Dominican's Department of Political Science and International Studies](#), has been with her every step of the way.

"Every single decision I asked her for help left and right," says Adrienne, who will enter Georgetown's Master of Science in Global Health program in the fall. "When a faculty adviser becomes your adviser and then your mentor it's very special ... Gigi's mentorship is even more valuable because she has always been there. Not too many young adults get to have those role models after college."

Adrienne, who grew up in San Francisco, entered Dominican undeclared, lured by its close proximity to family and its natural beauty.

"It's still the campus that draws me here. It's just so gorgeous," she says. "I liken it to a Sunday afternoon picnic. It's so peaceful."

At Dominican, Adrienne focused on her fascination with politics and her creativity as a writer. Gokcek was her instructor in a Research Methods class. Adrienne expressed interest in conducting research in the area of human rights.

"That class pushed me to a place where, if I was going to be the kind of student and potential scholar in the future that I knew I wanted to be, I'd have to get through a class like that," she says. "That pushed me in both of my majors."

It also helped Adrienne that Dominican hosted the National Conference for Undergraduate Research (NCUR) in 2007.

"It encouraged me to pursue undergraduate research and also allowed me to see research as accessible to undergrads, rather than confined to graduate programs or assistantships with professors," Adrienne says. Being in the Research Methods course and having NCUR on campus inspired Adrienne to produce a poster presentation on sex trafficking and security governance.

"She is one of the most caring, selfless, responsible, and intelligent human beings I have ever met," Gokcek says. "Adrienne is a truly an altruistic young woman with lifelong goals to help those that are less fortunate in the world. It is only a matter of time before her name is well known for the good that she does beyond just California and the United States."

In 2009, Adrienne enrolled in a summer course at DIS or Danish Institute's Study Abroad program. In 2010, the research she presented at the Western Political Science Association annual meeting led to recruitment from graduate programs. Yet, after graduation from Dominican, Adrienne first volunteered with Vincentian Service Corps West at the St. Vincent's Medical Center in Los Angeles.

Adrienne, who also managed a summer camp in Kenya for the Vincentian Lay Missionaries, this year applied for grad school and was accepted at Georgetown and Boston University, along with Tufts, George Washington, George Mason, Emory and the University of Maryland.

Gokcek advised Adrienne to get a sense of each campus and decide "where you belong."

"It's been scary and exciting because I knew there were so many opportunities," Adrienne says. "There was no wrong decision."

Now Adrienne, who is working at Crossover Health in Cupertino, is focused on what direction she wants to take with Global Health at Georgetown. She has a desire to return to the problem of human trafficking as, she says, “it’s something I can take on, armed a little bit better this time because I’m coming at it from a health approach that makes sense.” But Adrienne, who is volunteering for the American Red Cross in San Francisco, also has developed a passion for natural disaster relief.

Either way, Gokcek says, “We are fortunate to have Adrienne as one of our alumni. She is an excellent role model for all of our current and future students.”