

# WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24th

[Wednesday Front Desk and Conference Information](#)

## Opening Keynote Speaker : 10:30-11:30 a.m.

[Note to Self: There is power in the "In-Between"](#)

[Mia Brabham](#)

Feeling lost, unmotivated, or unsure of the path ahead? Do you know what you want, but are struggling with how to get there? Been there. Or at least, author and JMU alumna Mia Brabham has been. When Mia was a student at JMU, she began writing what would become her first book without even knowing it. Walking to class, waiting for the bus, and in the bathroom at work, she began scribbling down takeaways from the good and bad of her circuitous journey in a phone note she titled “Note to Self.” Years later, she took the scraps of her life learnings — on everything from dreams and career to rejection and heartbreak — and turned all of her “in-betweens” into something powerful: lessons. Now, she’s back for the College of Arts and Letters Career Conference with one question for you: what do you plan to do with your in-between?

Part pep talk and part advice session, with tender musings and tough love Mia shares tidbits of her experiences post grad and talks through how to grieve this time and accept where you are in order to get to where you are going.

## Networking Brownbag for Alumni and Faculty: 12-1 p.m.

### Session One: 1:00-2:00 p.m.

[1A: How’d You Get There?: Circuitous Paths After Graduation](#)

Michael Klein, Moderator

Alumni: Anna Laura Grant, Megan Ely, Maureen Walsh, Dmitry Pompee, Allan Luethke

Career trajectories rarely follow a straight line, particularly in the modern job market. Many college graduates, including those with liberal arts degrees, find their careers taking surprising – and surprisingly rewarding – paths. Alumni panelists will discuss their journeys and offer audience members advice for starting their own potentially circuitous paths.

### [1B: What I Learned Working That I Didn't Learn in the Classroom](#)

Eric Fife, Moderator

Alumni: Katie Bowles, Mia Brabham, Jessica Raines, Chrissy Garrett, Adam Slayton

No degree can prepare us for every challenge, or provide all of the skills and knowledge needed for entering the career world. Alumni panelists will share what they learned on the job (or in the world) that they didn't learn in the classroom, and will offer current students strategies for adapting to career demands.

### **Session Two: 2:15-3:15 p.m.**

#### [2A: Careers in Liberal Arts: Knowing – and Selling – the Strengths of a Liberal Arts Degree](#)

Kevin Jefferson, Moderator

Alumni: Anne Hardrick, Maria Cambone, Teresa Cummings, Raphael Perrino, Kara Frank

Liberal Arts degrees offer many advantages in the career world. Employers in a wide range of fields value the habits of mind and the critical thinking, communication, research, and interpersonal skills developed through a liberal arts curriculum. Yet those with a liberal arts degree may have to explain, defend, or sell its strengths to parents, potential employers, or other stakeholders. This panel will explore what a liberal arts degree can offer and how to communicate its value.

#### [2B: Careers in Doing Good: Work that Makes a Difference](#)

Becca Howes-Michel, Moderator

Alumni: Sarah Johnson, Sarah Hogg, Brenna Matlock, Anna Laura Grant, Tiffanie Rosier, Aaron Minnick

Liberal arts degrees offer unique opportunities for careers in service, nonprofit, social justice, civic engagement, advocacy, and other fields that focus on doing good. Alumni panelists will reflect on their own experiences serving in such fields, and offer advice to current students interested in careers in doing good.

## [2C: Doing Business with a Liberal Arts Degree](#)

Corey Hickerson, Moderator

Alumni: Megan Ely, Davey Ahearn, Patrick Miller, Isabelle Furth, Alex Husband

Many liberal arts graduates find themselves doing business: starting small (or big) businesses, consulting or contracting, or otherwise working in the business world. Alumni will share their experiences and advice for navigating that world and leveraging their liberal arts degree to succeed.

## **THURSDAY MARCH, 25th**

### [Thursday Front Desk and Conference Information](#)

#### **Workshops: 9:40-10:55 a.m.**

[Resumes/Cover Letters](#)

[Networking](#)

[Interviews](#)

[Internships and Volunteering](#)

#### **Workshops: 11:20-12:35 p.m.**

[Resumes/Cover Letters](#)

[Networking](#)

[Interviews](#)

[Internships and Volunteering](#)

## **Session Three: 1:00-2:00 p.m.**

### [3A: Knowing Where to Start: Job Search Strategies for Finding Your First Job\(s\)](#)

Traci Zimmerman, Moderator

Alumni: Joe Maddrey, Lauren Bennett, Adrian Kiss, Karina Touzinsky, Allison Capley

The process of finding that first job – or changing jobs early career – can be daunting, particularly considering the wide range of career opportunities available to those with a liberal arts degree. Alumni panelists will offer stories, strategies, advice, and encouragement for the job search process, particularly in the early career stages.

### [3B: Equity in the Workplace](#)

Jen Almjeld, Moderator

Alumni: Sarah Johnson, Amy Schramm, Brenna Matlock, Sarah Hogg

Despite progress in workplace equity, gaps and barriers remain for people of color, women, members of the LGBTQ + community, people with disabilities, and other marginalized groups. This panel will explore ways to navigate the sometimes-complex territory of equity in the workplace. Alumni will offer strategies for making workplaces, and the greater community, more inclusive, diverse, and equitable.

### [3C: How'd You Get There?: Circuitous Paths After Graduation](#)

Dabney Bankert, Moderator

Alumni: Brian Watkins, Katie Bowles , Kristen Greiner, Davey Ahearn, Chelsea Reed

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### [3D: Do's and Don'ts for Thriving on the First Job](#)

Scott Lunsford, Moderator

Alumni: Bruce Kaufman, Johnny Constable, Julia Fiorio, Melody Hackett, Amanda Del Re, Melissa Marks

Settling into the first job can be challenging after graduation. Alumni from a wide range of careers will offer stories, suggestions, and advice for navigating those challenges and thriving on the first job.

## **FRIDAY, MARCH 26th**

### [Friday Front Desk and Conference Information](#)

#### **Session Four: 9:15-10:15 a.m.**

#### [4A: Careers in Liberal Arts: Knowing – and Selling – the Strengths of a Liberal Arts Degree](#)

Sharon Cote, Moderator

Alumni: Dan Singer, Haima Askari, Kathryn Gilbert, Gabriella Rodriguez, Maureen Walsh, Kristen Greiner

Liberal Arts degrees offer many advantages in the career world. Employers in a wide range of fields value the habits of mind and the critical thinking, communication, research, and interpersonal skills developed through a liberal arts curriculum. Yet those with a liberal arts degree may have to explain, defend, or sell its strengths to parents, potential employers, or other stakeholders. This panel will explore what a liberal arts degree can offer and how to communicate its value.

#### [4B: What I Learned Working That I Didn't Learn in the Classroom](#)

Glenn Hastedt, Moderator

Alumni: Erin Hawley, Dave Gorrie, Paige Lobuts, Kathryn McAbee, Quasar Parfitt

No degree can prepare us for every challenge, or provide all of the skills and knowledge needed for entering the career world. Alumni panelists will share what they learned on the job (or in the world) that they didn't learn in the classroom, and will offer current students strategies for adapting to career demands.

#### [4C: Careers in Legal Fields](#)

Melinda Adams, Moderator

Alumni: Scott Ingram, Tripp Hughes, Neal Allen, Ricardo Piñeres, Lauren Brice

Not everyone with a law degree practices law – but some do. This panel will explore the range and variety of careers in legal fields, and help current students understand both traditional and unexpected paths a legal career can take.

### **Session Five: 10:30-11:30 a.m.**

#### [5A: Knowing Where to Start: Job Search Strategies for Finding Your First Job\(s\)](#)

Daisy Breneman, Moderator

Alumni: Erin Hawley, Mike Dolzer, Maria Cambone, Bennett Conlin, Justin Long

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#### [5B: Equity in the Workplace](#)

Karen McDonnell, Moderator

Alumni: Katie Sensabaugh, Michael Hickman, Gabriella Rodriguez, Lauren Armbruster

Despite progress in workplace equity, gaps and barriers remain for people of color, women, members of the LGBTQ + community, people with disabilities, and other marginalized groups. This panel will explore ways to navigate the sometimes-complex territory of equity in the workplace. Alumni will offer strategies for making workplaces, and the greater community, more inclusive, diverse, and equitable.

#### [5C: Beyond the Bachelor's Degree: Graduate and Professional Education](#)

Kevin Jefferson, Moderator

Alumni: Kaitlin Bridgeforth, Daniel St. John, Haima Askari, Ciara Brennan, Timothy Brown

A wide range of graduate and professional degrees and certificates are available after completing an undergraduate education. In this panel, alumni will explore their postgraduate educational paths, and share advice with current students considering continuing their own education.

*5D: Balancing Acts: Managing Work, Life, and Passion Projects*

Peggy Plass, Moderator

Alumni: Allison Capley, Sarah Hogg, Julia Fiorio, Matt Merritt, Mia Brabham, Anna Laura Grant

Work/life balance has become even more important during the pandemic, and graduates will benefit from learning to navigate multiple roles at once. This panel explores strategies for finding and maintaining balance, particularly for those pursuing multiple jobs, civic engagement opportunities, and passion projects.

**Closing Remarks and Keynote Speaker: 12:00-1:00 p.m.**

*There is No Wrong Place to Start to Create Your Future*

[April Armstrong](#)