

Katelyn Theis is a senior attending the University of Wisconsin-Stout in Menomonie, Wisconsin.

Q) How did you first get interested in the graphic arts, or decide to major in graphic communications in school?

A) I had an interest in graphic design throughout high school. I loved the creativity that was involved in the design process, but I knew I also had communications and management skills that I wanted to develop. Graphic Communications was the perfect combination of all my interests. I actually did not know it was a major until I toured UW-Stout. Since then I have never questioned my decision, and I know it was the best choice for me.

Q) Did you take any courses in high school that were related to graphic communications, or that prepared you for your planned career?

A) I took all of the art classes that were offered in my high school, which wasn't many compared to some schools. I took photography, drawing, and an intro to graphics classes. My high school didn't have any printing classes or graphic design at the time, but I did learn how to use basic Photoshop and Illustrator.

Q) What course of studies are you taking now, or planning on taking, during the path of your school education?

A) Since I am in the last semester of my college career, I have taken or I am in the process of taking all of the courses required for my degree. I have taken the core classes for Cross-Media Graphics Management like Cross-Media Practicum, Publication Production, and Workflow Automation. I also have a minor in Web Technology so I have completed courses like Search Engine Optimization, Web Production, and Dynamic Web Technologies.

Looking to the Future

Q) Is there a particular area of the graphic communications field that is of special interest to you as you consider where you want to focus your future career on?

A) I have a love for graphic design and prepress services but I am also interested in digital marketing and web design. At my internship I was a graphic coordinator and really enjoyed the work I did.

Q) What type of company would you like to work for after you graduate?

I really enjoy working with food products and advertising. Ideally, I would like to have a career involved in the graphics department for a company working with natural foods. I am open to other opportunities, but will probably end up in the graphics department or digital marketing areas of a well-respected company.

Q) What do you think employers are looking for in today's workforce and current industry environment?

A) I think employers are looking for people that work hard and are willing to learn new things. Adaptability is also a big thing I think employers are searching for in their future employees. Technology

and the industry changes regularly, and it is important for employees to be observant and accepting to those changes.

Q) Is there anything that you have found to be particularly different from what you initially expected now that you've progressed through your education process?

A) I did not realize how many channels and areas of customization that can happen with my degree. There are so many different directions you can take with a degree in Cross-Media Graphics Management and there are so many doors open to me because of this.

Q) Have you changed your plans or ideas about what area or type of job you might like to have since you first considered the graphic communications field and began studying for a career in it?

A) When I first started my education in graphic communications, I was not set on what I wanted to do as a career. I was open to the options and enjoyed learning about the different graphic services and press systems. After a while, I realized I liked working with graphics but could use my knowledge about the different press processes to my advantage. For me, it was an evolution of interests and skills that I developed throughout my degree to help me realize what I want to do as a career.

Q) Has being a recipient of a PGSF scholarship made a difference in your education, and if so, how?

A) Being a recipient of the PGSF scholarship has made it easier for me to focus on my goals and to continue to strive to do the best I can throughout my education. Receiving this scholarship has been one of the most rewarding accomplishments I have had. It has granted me the funds to continue my education and it has inspired me to spread the word about graphic communications.

Q) Anything else that you would like to add?

A) Thank you to everyone at PGSF! I am forever grateful for your generosity and support of my education!