

Alumni Spotlight featuring Jesse Somers



Jesse Somers, 37, of Latrobe, PA, attended Westmoreland County Community College from 2006-2010 and is our featured alumnus.

So what made Somers want to attend Westmoreland after high school?

“After high school graduation, I did not know exactly what I wanted to do. I came to Westmoreland just trying to get a feel for what interested me. The advisors/counselors I met with were able to give me a generic schedule with courses that fit into several different majors. I was working full-time and just continued to take random courses here and there. Before I

knew it, I was on track to earn an associate degree in Liberal Arts,” explains Somers.

While at the college, Somers earned an associate degree in Liberal Arts and most of his general elective courses were Psychology courses. After graduating, Somers visited PennWest California in the summer of 2010, where they were able to accept all 63 credits he completed at Westmoreland into their BA Psychology degree. Furthermore, he was able to continue at Westmoreland in the Fall of 2010 where he took another 12 credits. He transferred in 75 credits, which led him to complete his Bachelor's degree in 3 semesters. He then went on for his M.Ed in School Counseling at PennWest and graduated in 2014.

When looking back at his college days, his fondest memories were the staff.

“I have never encountered a more welcoming and helping environment anywhere else. Being a first-generation college student in my family, I really didn't know what I was doing and I often asked a ton of questions from academics, financial aid, and ordering textbooks. I think the culture still holds true to this day,” states Somers.

Did Somers have a favorite instructor?

“I have had so many great instructors here at Westmoreland County Community College. I took a lot of evening courses at the Latrobe campus and Youngwood campus. Oftentimes, I would

have adjunct instructors who taught at other local four- year schools. This always reinforced my thoughts on gaining a solid education,” explains Somers.

Now that he has graduated from Westmoreland, what is he up to now?

Somer states, “After graduating with my masters degree in 2014, I worked at Eastern Westmoreland Career and Technology Center as a career pathways coordinator and teaching assistant. I then became a Licensed Professional Counselor in 2018 and worked for an agency as a school-based therapist.”

“In the summer of 2019, I applied to Westmoreland County Community College and was hired as a counselor at the Latrobe Education Center. I continued working part-time at Westmoreland and doing school based therapy from 2019 until 2022. In the summer of 2022, I got hired full-time at Westmoreland as a TRIO Counselor. I also work part-time as a counselor/therapist at Innersight.”

Westmoreland prepared Somers for his current career by laying the foundation for him to enter a career in counseling. His education in psychology started at Westmoreland and he had great instructors that inspired him early on to achieve his goal.

Somers wouldn’t be where he is today without the ones who helped him out in his academic journey.

Jimmy Pirlo made a lasting impression during his admissions process at Westmoreland. Art Colagrande’s help in advising and counseling him early on in his endeavors has helped him in his endeavor. To this day, Art continues to be a close friend today. Dr. John Massella’s counseling and supervising at PennWest developed into a great friendship, as well. There have been so many that have helped him achieve his goals and even believed in him when he would doubt himself.

In his spare time, Somers likes fishing, classic cars, being outdoors and tinkering on anything and everything.

His advice to current college students?

“Have patience and enjoy the process. Accept the challenge and take in everything that you are facing,” says Somers.