

Mom on a mission

Fields Scholarship recipient never gave up on her goals

A former paralegal, Jenny Hoppie is proving that it's never too late to pursue your dreams. A first-year student at Concordia University School of Law, Jenny is the recipient of the Fields Scholarship awarded annually to one student who has demonstrated a commitment to serving others. Encouraged to apply for the scholarship by her admission counselor, Jenny was impressed that Concordia Law offered such a generous scholarship.

Soon after a video interview with several professors, she was notified that she would be the recipient for the 2019-2020 incoming class. "I was absolutely shocked and quite humbled by the opportunity that this scholarship provides," said Jenny. A mother of four children, Jenny has been a working mom her entire adult life and said that leaving her job to attend law school was a "financially daunting" prospect. "The Fields Scholarship has provided a degree of financial security that I would otherwise have been without."

Simple gestures, big rewards

Born in Utah, Jenny grew up in Arizona and then moved back to Utah with her young family. A political science major, she graduated from Utah Valley University in Orem, Utah. During college, Jenny was active in her service to others, which had the unexpected benefit of helping improve her academic performance. She helped a student with learning disabilities by taking notes for him which grew into sharing her notes with any student who may have missed a lecture or simply needed a study boost, a practice that withstood through her four years of college. "When I was taking notes with the intention to share them with others, I was much more attentive to the lectures and created more thorough and comprehensive notes," said Jenny. "This practice benefited me and the classmates with whom I shared the notes and greatly improved my educational experience."

During her junior and senior years, Jenny spread her volunteer wings and joined a sustainability group on campus and served one term as president. She organized lectures about women's issues, sustainable development, and issues of interest to mountain communities. More recently, Jenny has served as an advisor and mentor to 12-18-year-old young women in her congregation, has served as the church's girl's camp director and volunteered for six years as a song leader and Sunday school teacher for younger children. Now that Jenny is in her second semester of law school, she is eligible and eager to pursue pro bono opportunities so that she can be of service in the community and put what she's learning into practice.

Where everybody knows your name

As passionate as Jenny is about being generous with her time and talents, and as committed as she is to community, it's not surprising that Concordia Law's service-based mission piqued her interest when researching law schools. She also found the prospect of smaller class sizes appealing, "not being one of 500+ students" is more conducive to meaningful interactions with classmates and being able to help one another. "I love that I know the names of most of my classmates and that my professors are able to get to know me as an individual."

Concordia Law's flexibility and support for non-traditional students, including "back-to-school moms" like her, was crucial for Jenny in taking the leap of faith to pursue her dreams. "I love the idea that by helping a mom achieve her educational goals, her entire family, for generations, will benefit."

Positioned to help

While Jenny hopes to return to Utah after graduating from law school, she is eager to continue building friendships and relationships in Boise and plans to work as a law clerk while in school. Having worked as a paralegal for medical malpractice litigation, Jenny envisions focusing her career in that specialty. "I found it very satisfying to help and support clients who were dealing with one of the most traumatic experiences of their lives," said Jenny. To those mulling whether law school might be the path for them,

Jenny said to be prepared for the intensity and academic rigor. “It will be some of the most challenging work you ever do but remain focused on the fact that as a lawyer you will be uniquely positioned to help where help is otherwise unavailable.”

Reflecting on her penchant for wanting to build camaraderie with and help her fellow students, Jenny believes it’s in those moments of caring for others she was able to enhance her own learning experiences. “I realized that reaching out to other students in need and putting myself in a position to assist them, increased my focus on and understanding of the concepts we were learning together.”

For more about financial aid, including scholarship opportunities, visit [Financial Aid](#).