

News Release

Senior Kathryn Sheetz Focused on Great Finish

By Elizabeth Tollefson on Monday, October 26, 2015

If Kathryn Sheetz, a health sciences major from Grand Rapids, Minn., could be summed in a single sentence, it would be this: "Actions will speak louder than words." The senior radiates a kind of quiet confidence that seems to course through everything she does. And, she does a lot.

Initially, Sheetz came to Crookston to play Golden Eagle Golf and she has been a high profile member of the team since she was a freshman. Along with being a student-athlete, she has taken on leadership roles serving on the executive boards of four of the six clubs she belongs to. Her calendar is filled to capacity but never at the neglect of what matters most to her—academics.

Sheetz has been a part of research projects in the classroom and outside as well. Two years ago she began as a lab assistant working on sugarbeet research with Jason Brantner, a research fellow at the Northwest Research and Outreach Center (NWROC). "Working on the research with Jason has been a great experience for me and probably the best job I have had yet," Sheetz states. "As lab assistant, I have been involved in sugarbeet stand counts, entering data, and soil DNA extractions for example. It has been great for me to have a job that is science-related." "I came to Crookston because of golf, but interesting classes and awesome professors became a reason to stay," Sheetz says. "I also saw undergraduate research as an important reason for me to choose this campus and research certainly has

played a big role in my life as a student."

"Working at the NWROC has taken me out of my field and broadened my understanding of scientific study," she continues. "As I move into a professional career in pharmacy, I have a greater understanding of how research in the plant world could affect the development of pharmaceuticals in the health field."

One of the highlights of her college golf career happened as a sophomore when she shot a hole-in-one with her parents present at Tartan Park in Lake Elmo, Minn.

In her academic career, one of the pivotal moments took place in organic chemistry. "As a group project we were to attempt to synthesize new antibiotics," she explains. "Our project failed but it inspired in me the desire to keep trying over and over again. I believe it was that failed project that actually confirmed my future and helped me set my goal to become a pharmacist."

Her interest in chemistry was sparked much earlier as a high school student in Mrs. Melissa Ewen's class at Grand Rapids High School. "Mrs. Ewen is the original reason I fell in love with chemistry and it is her teaching that really made a difference in the direction I would take in college," Sheetz reflects.

Sheetz is determined to focus on her senior year on campus by participating in activities and being a contributing member of the Honors Program, Alpha Lambda Delta, National Society for Leadership and Success (NSLS), Student Athletic Advisory Committee (SAAC), the Newman Club, Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA), and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).

"I want to be able to experience my final year and give back to the clubs and organizations I am a part of," Sheetz says.

A conversation with her advisor Associate Professor Brian Dingmann helped Sheetz clarify her goals and confirmed her decision to take a year off, apply for pharmacy school, and work as a pharmacy tech. "It will give me a chance to gain some valuable experience and allow me to do my best on the graduate school applications," she says.

When she looks back, Sheetz recalls having teachers that helped reassure her she had chosen the right major. "I have so many to thank, but a few who stand out are Assistant Professor Tim Dudley, associate professors Katy Nannenga, Brian Dingmann who all teach in the sciences, and Assistant Professor Marcella Melby who taught my calculus class," Sheetz notes.

"I knew that I was building a great foundation in the sciences and that the Crookston campus was where I belonged. When it's right, you know it."

In the photos, at top, Kathryn Sheetz at work in the lab and bottom, left, Assistant Professor Ashok Chanda, Research Fellow Jason Brantner, and Senior Kathryn Sheetz at work in the NWROC lab.

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