

Class of 1999 Reflection - Lauren Brown

The Class of '99 arrived on campus as freshman in the fall of 1995. Although I can't quite remember the specifics of that day, there are a few things I know were true. I'm sure Dave Matthews Band was being played through an open window onto the Quad, where a group of guys was probably playing hacky sack. I know many of us were opening up Eudora on our clunky desktop computers and sending emails for the first time. We were excited to watch Friends and ER on Thursday night. And we loved our Gap sweatshirts. I'm also pretty sure that none of us could imagine the amazing journey we were beginning.

It's been 19 years since our Freshman year. It's hard to believe, but that means that those friendships we made at F&M have existed for half our lives. So what a great way to honor those connections by coming together on campus and celebrating our 15 year reunion. It's a time to remember the wonderful experiences we were lucky enough to share for 4 years (or maybe 5 for those of us who spent a little too much time at Brendee's!).

It's great to be back on campus. And while the grounds look amazing as always, we know that our college experience was about much more than the buildings surrounding us. What makes F&M so special is the friendships that were formed while "atriating" in the College Center or over Ben's Bread at Ben's Underground. It's the late night study sessions with classmates fueled by sugar and caffeine bought at Turkey Hill. It's the Professor that not only spent extra time ensuring we were ready for that exam, but also invited us over for dinner. It's the fraternity

brothers and sorority sisters that really did start feeling like family. It's the teammates that pushed us on the playing field and the co-stars that made us shine on stage.

All those years ago, we arrived on campus excited and nervous. We were ready to work hard and to play hard. We were ready to study, to volunteer our time and energy, and ready to participate in all F&M had to offer. F&M is more than a college or a campus or even an education. It was an introduction to our careers, to our passions, maybe to a spouse and certainly to amazing friends. And we are lucky to be back today sharing these memories.