

Samantha Stapleton

Following God's Plan



My name is Samantha Stapleton, and I am starting my junior year at Alice Lloyd College in the Honors Program as a Dean's Distinguished Scholar. I've maintained a 4.0 GPA while working 20 hours a week in the Financial Aid Office, a part-time job on weekends, singing in the *Voices of Appalachia* choir, and volunteering in both the Allied Health Club and Impact Club. I am also a member of Alice Lloyd's Leadership Program, which I feel is greatly preparing me for a future job in Eastern Kentucky.

I was born and raised in a small town in Eastern Kentucky called Paintsville. I attended Johnson Central High School and graduated as an honors student while juggling sports, extra-curricular activities, and work. I lived in a house at the head of a hollow with my mom, dad, and my brother. My parents have always inspired me to get a good education and be passionate about what I do.

Family is one of the most important things in my life, second only to my faith. There isn't a Sunday that I can remember when we weren't at church. It was understood that unless you were sick, you were expected to be there. Being raised in church has taught me so much about doing everything that I can to glorify God in my everyday life and how to show others my love for Him. I come from a family of singers; therefore, the biggest way that I worship God is through singing. I feel one of the easiest ways to spread my faith and encourage others is through song.

I am very proud of my faith and how it inspires me when I want to give up. Thus, picking a school where I could be open about my faith was very important to me. When considering colleges, I was extremely nervous about choosing where I was supposed to go. With many prayers from myself and all those around me, God decided to introduce me to Alice Lloyd College. I had never really heard of this small, private college tucked in the hills of Knott County until a representative came to my school for a presentation. Once I heard about how small the College is, I decided to schedule a visit.

After driving just one hour from my house, I arrived at the most beautiful, quaint campus I had ever seen. I stepped out of my car for my tour and found myself surrounded by people with smiling faces and welcoming arms. I knew immediately that this was the path that God had chosen for me and my walk with Him. Sometimes, it is hard to describe the feeling of that day and the peace that came over me. I instantly thought of a Bible verse, John 14:27, which reads, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." If I have learned one thing about God through my Christian walk, it's that He will always protect and guide me in situations when I need Him. I could never thank Him enough for pointing me to this small college where I feel entirely at home.

Once I knew that Alice Lloyd College was where I should be, the next thing I had to do was to choose a major. I knew that I wanted to do something in the medical field, and Alice Lloyd's wide variety of science majors and classes allowed me that opportunity. I have always been very interested in the human body and how it can be rehabilitated from injury; so, I really had an interest in physical therapy. After finding out about the College's Kinesiology Program, I knew exactly what I wanted to be. As a future physical therapist, I hope I can do my best to learn how the body rehabilitates itself and be able to assist people with this process. My main hope is that I can affect future patients in a positive way and for them to see their progress. One day, I would like to be able to work for the Veteran's Administration and give back to those who have given so much to our country.

One aspect about Alice Lloyd that I really love is that the College has a living facility at the University of Kentucky called Caney Cottage. I will be able to live in the Cottage during graduate school at no cost to me. I plan to attend the University of Kentucky for their Doctor of Physical Therapy Program in 2020 and graduate in 2023 as a physical therapist, ready to help others.

I'm looking forward to what God has planned for me in the future, and I can't thank our donors enough for being a part of that with me. I would like to leave you with my favorite Bible verse, Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose."