

Alumni spotlight: ADA Stephanie Mello, Class of 2006

By NINA CONSOLINI
BUSINESS EDUCATION TEACHER
WHITMAN-HANSON REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

The Express publishes this monthly feature highlighting the success of a Whitman Hanson alumni student, researched and selected by Business Education Teacher Nina Consolini. There are so many success stories to share, we hope you enjoy reading about these accomplished students.

This week we feature 2006 graduate Stephanie Mello.

Q: Did you go onto further your education after graduating from W-H?

A: After high school graduation, I attended Newbury College in Brookline for my first two years of undergraduate college with a major of pre-law and minor in corporate communications. However, at the end of my second year at Newbury, I transferred to Bridgewater State College where I finished out my bachelor's degree. While at

Bridgewater State, I completed a bachelor of science in political science with a minor in management, and graduated magna cum laude in May/June 2010.

After earning my bachelor's degree, I went on to law school. I attended the Massachusetts School of Law in Andover (MSL). I attended full time from 2010-2013 while working part-time as a legal assistant for a sole practitioner on Cape Cod, Thomas M. Grimmer, Esq. of Hyannis. In 2013, I graduated cum laude with my Juris Doctor degree from MSL with a minor in family law. Following law school graduation, I sat for the bar exam July 2013, and received my passing results later that October.

Q: What are you currently doing for employment?

A: After obtaining my Rule 3:03 certification from the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts, I was able to begin working for the Plym-



Stephanie Mello is an ADA with the Plymouth County District Attorney's office.

outh County District Attorney's Office under District Attorney Tim Cruz in September 2013, even though I wouldn't receive my bar exam results until about a month or two later. Since 2013, I have been working (and continue to work) as an Assistant District Attorney for the Plymouth County District Attorney's Office. I have been assigned to the Brockton, Hingham, and Plymouth District Courts, and

I have also been assigned a couple of cases in the Brockton Superior Court.

Q: What are some of your job responsibilities?

A: As an Assistant District Attorney (ADA), we prosecute criminal cases. My responsibilities as an ADA in the district court include prosecuting cases throughout the arraignment, pretrial, motion, and trial stages. Over the last three and a half years, I have tried a number of district court cases and a superior court case.

Q: Are you happy in this field?

A: I love my position. Working as an ADA for our county was my dream job throughout high school, and I am extremely lucky to be able to say that in 2013, at 25 years old, I accomplished my dream.

My colleagues and co-workers at the Plymouth County District Attorney's Office work tirelessly for the victims of crime in our com-

munity, and I am proud to say I am a part of that team. Every day brings a new challenge or a new learning experience where I can grow not only as a lawyer, but also as a member of my community, and as a person.

Q: Was there any one class or person at W-H that helped you realize this was your career goal?

A: While in my senior year, I enrolled in the Community Service Learning internship program at W-H with Mrs. Clancy. Through this wonderful opportunity, I was placed at the Plymouth County District Attorney's Office where I worked under both the IT Department and ultimately the Director of Community Service Relations, Barbara Faherty. It was through this program I was able to get a first-hand look at what our district attorney and his assistant district attorneys and staff do

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for our community to prosecute crime on behalf of our victims, and to prevent crime and keep our community safe. I was able to visit both the district court and superior court and observe trials, getting to

view our prosecutors in action. It was through this experience as a high school student intern I knew I wanted to be a prosecutor for my community.

Through my internship, I worked with Barbara Faherty on the Plymouth County District Attorney's Office's Drug

and Alcohol Resistance Education Summer Program for kids within our community. I enjoyed so much working for this program that I continued to participate in the program following the completion of my internship. I returned to the program as a camp peer

leader for several years and later became a behind the scenes coordinator assisting Barbara Faherty and the various Police Officers throughout the towns in our county that come together to make this program happen every year for fifth- and sixth-graders.

myself surrounded by friends who worked hard to reach their goals, but we also enjoyed life as it was happening around us.

Maintain a healthy balance, whatever that may mean for you. Spending time with your family, spending time with your friends, staying healthy and exercising, enjoying your hobbies, like for me – spending time down on Cape Cod out on my uncle's boat and the beach during the summer. Maintaining a healthy balance is so important to prevent burning yourself out, keeps you motivated and energized for whatever the day brings.

Take advantage of the opportunities around you, and seek out mentors along the way. Through CSL at W-H, my internship years at the Plymouth County District Attorney's Office, my student life MSL, and my employment as a legal assistant, I have had the privilege of learning from experienced people who have shared their knowledge, wisdom, and guidance with me, and were instrumental in assisting and supporting me as I worked to achieve my goals.

Q: Any additional words of wisdom you would like to share?

A: Stay true to yourself and follow your heart. Surround yourself with family and friends who will always be there to support you as you journey through life, and always be mindful of your goals and dreams working towards great accomplishments. I hope one day you too can say that you love what you do for a living.

Q: Where you involved in any clubs/sports while at W-H?

A: I was a member of the W-H Dance Team; I joined in the spring of my freshman or sophomore year (seems so long ago now!) and continued throughout senior year until graduation.

Q: What advice would you give to a high school student that would like to pursue your type of career?

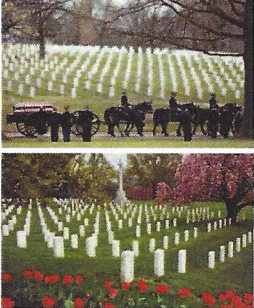
A: Never give up. When it comes to your dreams, don't stop until you've reached it, you're hard work will pay off in the end. And even when you do accomplish your dream, look forward to whatever comes next and keep dreaming.


Enjoy yourself along the way, meeting new friends. Throughout each academic experience I've had: high school, the two colleges I attended, and law school I found

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