

Alumni Spotlight: Valerie Williams (MACL '12)



Current title: Senior Manager—Engagement

Favorite professors: Dr. Rodney Cooper and Dr. Tim Laniak

Favorite class: I think it was called “Team Building.”

Favorite memory: An overnight retreat with the students for one of Dr. Laniak’s class

What have you been doing since you left Gordon-Conwell and what are you doing now?

After graduation, I accepted a position as a chaplain with Corporate Chaplains of America. I was a chaplain in the marketplace for Coca-Cola Consolidated. I served as a chaplain for five years, caring for about 600 employees. For the last five years, I have been employed by Coca-Cola Consolidated as part of the Teammate Engagement team, where I serve around 4500 teammates, caring for them and providing opportunities for them to impact their communities through volunteerism.

What do you love about your work?

I love the purpose statement of Coke, which is: *To Honor God in All We Do, To Serve Others, To Pursue Excellence, To Grow Profitably.*

In my role, I have the opportunity to serve others by serving my teammates and serving in my community. I have participated in several prayer groups, Bible studies, and spiritual mentoring groups. I have co-founded a Women’s Leadership Forum and I have co-created a HBCU S.O.A.R. scholar program which awards ten students the opportunity to participate in a week-long program at Coca-Cola Consolidated and receive a scholarship.



What are the joys and challenges of serving in the business/for-profit world in general and in your specific context?

The joy of serving in business is the daily opportunity to shine my light in the workplace and to encourage others to do the same. The numerous teammates around me who have a desire to volunteer in their community are heartwarming, and it is a joy to help coordinate volunteer opportunities for them.

For-profit organizations have the resources to support the community, but one of the challenges is recognizing the overwhelming needs of so many people and trying to support as many non-profit organizations as possible, which support our underserved neighbors.

How has God woven together your Gordon-Conwell education with other life events to bring you to where you are now?

It is because of my Gordon-Conwell education that I was able to secure a position as a chaplain for Corporate Chaplains of America. In 2017, my church recognized my work as a chaplain and ordained me in ministry. I have also served with Coca-Cola Consolidated teammates on a short-term mission trip to Nicaragua.

After serving directly with the executive leaders of Coca-Cola Consolidated as their chaplain with Corporate Chaplains of America, I was approached with the opportunity to work full-time for Coca-Cola Consolidated.

What has been Gordon-Conwell's biggest impact/influence on the work you do now or the way you do your work?

Gordon-Conwell's biggest impact on my work has been the importance of establishing healthy relationships in the church, with my family, my workplace, and the community. And remembering that all humans are *Imago dei*, created in the image of God. We are all children of God, and just as God has been patient with me and extends His grace and mercy every day, I must do the same with all His children. I have learned that hurting individuals do not care how much I know or learned in seminary; they only want to know that I care about them and their circumstances. My seminary education has also been beneficial with the teaching of Bible studies in the workplace and leading spiritual mentoring groups.

What piece of advice would you give to young alumni who are considering serving in the business world?

The piece of advice I would give to young alumni is to be open to the possibilities that God will provide, and that there are ministry opportunities in the marketplace. Serving as a chaplain in the marketplace is an incredible opportunity to shine the light on Jesus Christ. And, if given the opportunity to work for a for-profit organization that desires to serve others and impact the community, then walk through the open door.

Do you have any publications or links to share?

Learn more about [Corporate Chaplains of America](#) and [Coca-Cola Consolidated](#).