Alumni
GORDON CONWELL

Alumni Spotlight: Katie Donworth (MABL ’10)

Current title: Director of Principal Gifts Communication and Strategy at Purdue University

Family: Husband: Tim (MDiv ’15), Children: Lizzie, Abby, and Nate

Favorite professor: Dr. Donna Petter & Dr. Gerry Wheaton

Favorite class: Gospel of John

A favorite memory: Going out to lunch with all the women taking summer Hebrew I.

Would you tell us about your role there at Purdue for Life Foundation?

The Purdue for Life Foundation is the development office of Purdue University in Indiana. I help all the fundraisers, especially in engineering, and have the background, materials, and strategies to cultivate, solicit, and steward gifts of five million dollars or more. I also support the university’s comprehensive campaign by drafting cases for support, white papers, and collateral to rally high-net-worth alumni to give to their alma mater’s strategic priorities

How did you come to be serving in higher education, and in your current position, after seminary and what did you do in between?

I arrived at Gordon-Conwell with a passion for learning and wanting to infuse that into others through teaching. After deciding not to pursue more education, I ended up teaching as an adjunct professor at Gordon College in a variety of courses while I also worked in their advancement department, supporting alumni and fundraising communications. I enjoyed my work the most when writing donor proposals. I transitioned to work for Purdue (remotely from Massachusetts) in August 2021 to focus entirely on proposal writing.

What do you love about the work you do?

I love learning about new fields of study, researching backgrounds, and writing content to help infuse alumni with passion about potential investments. I like working in an “upstream” environment, where my work helps hundreds of others—students learning in higher education and in workforce development. My role effectively teaches philanthropists about how they can have an impact on society through Purdue, which is different from what I had expected I would do with my life, but it is similarly fulfilling.

What are the particular challenges you encounter in this role?

The biggest challenges I face are navigating different personalities and supporting work, where expectations can shift on a daily basis based on leadership decisions or changing donor needs.

What has been Gordon-Conwell's biggest impact/influence on your current role or the way you engage in your role?

At Gordon-Conwell I built on the research, writing, and synthesis skills that I developed in undergrad. Through many exegesis papers, I had to practice the logic of arguments and how to track down supporting information. I use those research and logic skills daily in my current role.