



Suki Deen

Nine years ago my parents and I boarded a plane bound for the United States of America, the land of opportunity. As a young girl born and raised in Nairobi, Kenya my parents had always wanted to give me the best, so when I was six years old my parents filled out paperwork to apply for U.S citizenship. Ten long years passed before they received a letter from the United States Government saying, “Congratulations, you have been accepted to become permanent residents of the United States of America.” And so we decided to take the opportunity! We sold the cars, we gave away our belongings, and we packed up our hopes and dreams into three suitcases and a box. With our eyes moist with tears we said goodbye to the ones we loved the most and boarded a plane bound for....Newark, Delaware.

After completing high school at Cab Calloway School of the Arts I began as a freshman at the University of Delaware. I decided to study English and it was a good choice as it has had a direct impact on my current career path. All the professors were enjoyable, my classes were thought provoking and I made some of the best friends I have ever had. My experience at University of Delaware was so great that I was very sad to see it all come to an end in the summer of 2005.

Two years passed and I moved into the ‘real world’. I got a house of my own, bought a car and started at a crappy job with little pay. The real world was actually a lot less attractive than I had expected and I guess you could say I went through some sort of quarter life crisis. Working at a computer eight hours a day and doing a job I hated made me long for a new path. I started looking into earning my master’s degree.

The first university that popped to mind was the University of Delaware. I started looking into a program that would allow me to express myself creatively, while also inspiring me and teaching me new things. While searching the University’s website I came across the MALS program. *Wow*, I thought to myself, *a program that is creative, interesting, and respectable*. What’s more I discovered I could take evening classes while

still working at my (crappy) job. The MALS program was designed for people just like me, with a full time job, or kids, or other responsibilities. I decided to sign up straight away.

I was pleasantly surprised to receive an acceptance letter to the MALS program in the mail. The summer before my first MALS class I met with then MALS Director Gary May to discuss the program. I was so excited and very ready to get back to the books. As summer turned into fall I prepared myself for my new path.

During this time I started a club called the Delaware Writer's Group. As a young adult in the workforce I realized how easy it was to forget about creative writing. I wanted to inspire other adults just like me and give them an outlet for their creative talents. Through this group I have realized how important it is to keep writing and not give up just because you are no longer in school. Creative writing is not just a pastime, it is an expression and we should encourage people to tap into their writing abilities and always strive to improve themselves.

Taking the MALS courses has been such a pleasant experience and I feel like a stronger person because of it. MALS courses are so unique because you can learn a range of very qualified professors while also learning from the other students in your class. The MALS students range in age from 25 to over 70. They come from all kinds of different backgrounds, and this leads to some great class discussions. I am so glad I decided to go back to school.

I will be graduating from MALS in a year and I am very excited to see where my new path will lead. Oh and you will be happy to know, I no longer have that crappy job!