

Sierra Alley '13

Reading. Writing. Research.

by Christiane Newell '15

The next step for many Peace students following graduation is graduate school. Sierra Alley, a member of the Class of 2013, is currently pursuing her M.F.A. in poetry at The College of Saint Rose in Albany, New York where she will graduate in 2016.

"I absolutely love to write poetry," she said. "I have been writing poetry since 2004 and I have been published since 2005. Writing has always been a great outlet for me to express anything that is bothering me."

At Peace, Alley completed her Bachelor of Arts degree in English with a minor in writing. As a student, she worked on the *Prism*, Peace's literary magazine, and was a member of the student book club.

"My best memories are when the English department would have get-togethers at Tyler's," she explained. "We always had so much fun hanging out, laughing, talking about novels and literature. I really cherish having those moments with my fellow English majors and the department."

Like every Peace student, Alley completed an internship before her graduation. Her internship taught her valuable skills that she can now put to use while at The College of Saint Rose.

"I interned at the State Library of North Carolina," she said. "At my internship, I worked a lot on their online encyclopedia website, and the search engines, sites and tools that I used there have really helped me a lot with the research I am doing in graduate school."

To find the perfect graduate school for her, Alley started extensive research a year before she graduated from Peace. Before applying to graduate schools, she looked into how many students were in the programs, how long it took students to complete the program, what the school was like and where it was located, among other things.

"When I was researching graduate schools last year, I wanted to find a school that not only had a wonderful creative writing program, but that also embodied a safe place for me to grow and learn as a writer in a supportive environment," she explained. "I knew that this program would allow me to do those things."

Alley's advice to students looking to go to graduate school after Commencement is to start looking early. Students should know exactly how they wish to attend school, whether full-time, online or part-time, and what financial aid is offered.

Some graduate programs require the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) or other standardized testing, and students should make sure they have time to study and take the exam before the application deadline. Letters of recommendation from current professors are also important and she cautions students to not wait until the last minute to get them if



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Photo: Lauren E. Gerber © 2013

they are thinking of applying right after graduation.

Although Alley's next graduation date is two years away, she already has big plans for her future.

"It has always been a dream of mine to publish a collection of my poetry," she said. "I feel like I have a story to tell with my poems that needs to be told."

Pam Heavner '76

Creativity. Passion. Innovation.

by Taylor C. Shaw '12

Interior designer Pam Pace Heavner's line of fabrics and stationary brings her sense of style to homes across the country. A Class of 1976 Peace graduate (AA, Fine Arts), she owns Pam Heavner Fabric in Chapel Hill, N.C. Her unique patterns, printed on 100 percent linen, are printed locally in Archdale, North Carolina.

"I'm trying my best to keep it close to home," she said. "Made in America is always the best idea, if it is possible."

Pam's fabrics, which are used for drapery and upholstery, feature various shades and original designs. They can be purchased online or at the Atlanta Design Center. Business has taken off since hitting the market two years ago, with buyers coming from California to London.

All of Pam's collections are named after family and friends. "This is a good way to keep things easy and organized – and I smile with every order, because that gives me a moment to think of that person."

More recently, Heavner revealed her newest product: *Pam Heavner Paper*. The stationery and paper goods collection is comprised of monograms and designs that are taken from 16th, 17th and 18th century books and papers. They are sold in Southern Season in North and South Carolina. In 2014, the line will expand into 25 to 50 new Southern Season stores.

Heavner's 25 year career as an interior designer has taken her all over the country. Last Christmas, she helped decorate the White House, and she frequently works in the flower shop there for various occasions.

Heavner's appreciation for art and antiques began at the age of 12 when she attended her first estate sale. This love followed her to Peace where she majored in Art.

What drew her to Peace were some of the same things that make the college unique today: small class sizes, personal attention from professors and a strong focus on academics.

"I have lifelong friends from Peace," Heavner said. "And, the professors looked after their students. They always had open doors and were able to be available to us."

After Peace, Heavner completed her Bachelor's degree in 1979 at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH). Today, she's very active as a volunteer in her local community and at Peace. She's a former chair of the Peace Board of Visitors, and she and her husband, Jim, are members of the prestigious *William Peace Society* for their generous gifts to the University. They are also members of *The Heritage Society* which recognizes donors who have made a plan in their will or a future estate gift to Peace.



PAM PACE HEAVNER '76

In 2002, the Heavners were named Outstanding Volunteer Fundraisers and the Association of Fundraising Professionals Triangle Chapter recognized them for their work during the Memorial Hall Transformation Campaign at UNC-CH.

Heavner has served on boards for the Carolina Women's Center at UNC-CH, the North Carolina Children's Hospital, the Ackland Art Museum at UNC-CH and the Carolina Women's Leadership Council.

To order Heavner's one-of-a-kind linens or stationery, visit her website at www.pamheavner.com.