

# Senior takes next step to serve with the Peace Corps

Rachel Southmayd  
Senior Reporter

While some seniors are packing up and heading to new apartments, graduate school or maybe moving back in with Mom and Dad, 22-year-old Avon, Conn.-native Emily Swords will be preparing to serve two years in the Peace Corps. Here she will be traveling wherever help and aid is needed. Swords majored in anthropology and minored in sociology and women and gender studies while at Elon.

"Anthropology took me on a service route," she said.

She participated in student government at Elon and served as the Leaders In Collaborative Service director for Elon Volunteers!

for the past two years. Swords also went abroad for each of her Winter Terms, to Australia, Guam, Honduras and this past winter to Ghana.

"I just fell in love," she said about travelling.

Swords' experience in Ghana led her to seek a Peace Corps appointment in either Africa or the South Pacific. She said the Corps makes assignments based on each person's interests and strengths.

"Depending on the program, there are a lot of areas I could do," she

said. "I'm hoping to work in HIV/AIDS education or women's sexual health."

Early in the fall, Swords will receive her Peace Corps assignment. She will train in the United States for three months and then move to her assigned location for two full years. Each month, she will receive two days off.

"I'm most looking forward to really experiencing a new culture firsthand and getting to spend a significant amount of time working on a specific project that will definitely make a difference to so many people," she said.

After her time in the Peace Corps is over, Swords will receive a stipend to resettle, and she said she isn't sure what she will do next.

-EMILY SWORDS  
ELON UNIVERSITY SENIOR

"I'll be right back where I am right now," she said.

Graduate school and working for the Peace Corps full time are both options Swords said she is considering.

"It's a once-in-a-lifetime experience that I've known I wanted to be a part of for a long time," she said. And Swords said she owes her interest in the Peace Corps partially to the experience she's had at Elon.

"As cliché as it sounds, Elon has done a great job of creating a global citizen out of me," she said.



Elon senior Emily Swords will join the Peace Corps in either Africa or South Pacific after graduation. PHOTO SUBMITTED

## Members of the Class of 2010:

As this year's graduates receive their diplomas, Senior Class President Jay Reno will end his term with the Elon University Student Government Association. These are some of his last words of advice for the senior class.



Jay Reno  
Senior Class President

Welcome to the "Real World."

Each year for the past 17 years of our lives has been structured much like the year preceeding it. In the fall we set foot into a new classroom, learn many interesting things and see countless new faces. When the school year is through, we all head home to enjoy a relaxing summer with our friends and families, only to return to the beginning of another year in the fall. Schooling has been a vital part of our lives ever since we can remember. Yet after Saturday, the end of the cyclical era is upon us, and a new world awaits our presence.

You will hear many eager seniors exclaim, "We're done." Though it is true we have concluded our undergraduate schooling at Elon and will soon receive our diplomas, we remain far from "done." In fact, we should observe this ending as a starting line, a time in which to make ourselves. Our degrees are nothing more than a tool — go out there and create something extraordinary with it. Perhaps a more appropriate exclamation is, "We've begun."

This new world we are entering is filled with opportunities to finally use what we have learned during our past four years as undergraduate students here at Elon. It is important to recognize that without the help and dedication of our families and the numerous members of the Elon community, we would not have made it to where we are today. Be sure to extend thanks to those who have helped you along the way.

Let your friends know how much you've enjoyed their company over these past four years. They have been there for you with a shoulder to lean on and as a source of inspiration. Remember to keep in touch.

Finally be sure to celebrate the beginning of your journey — not the end. We all have bright futures ahead of us.

Good luck to you all.

Cheers!

Jay Reno

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Class of 2010  
Graduates!!!



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