

Note: This final story assigned to us at the end of Spring 2019 semester was done due to it being common practice in the professional journalism industry to pre-write obituaries about VIPs in the community, nation or internationally—depending on the type of agency a writer is working for.

In being tasked to write about a local VIP to the Emory & Henry College community, I chose to do my story on Dr. Tracy Lauder. Dr. Lauder has been a mentor, advisor, instructor, recruiter, encourager and friend to me since making my decision to go back to school after leaving the healthcare profession. If it was not for Dr. Lauder and her efforts, I would not have attended Emory & Henry, and I have heard many stories of students, alumni, faculty and staff who praised her as an instructor, boss, person and friend—noting that she had enhanced the campus and their experience for them in some way. It only seemed fitting to choose her for this hypothetical/fictional obit.



(Above photo courtesy of Justin Hartsell.)

E&H Mourns Administrator's Passing

By: Justin Hartsell

Emory, Va. — Tracy Lauder, Director of the Ampersand Center at Emory & Henry College, long-term professor for the Mass Communications Department, and Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs, died on _____ at the age of _____ from _____.

Lauder, who had her doctorate in communications, was determined to provide resources for students to be successful and transition into the workforce.

Lauder told the 2016 Fall & Winter E&H Alumni Magazine, “We want students to go into job interviews excited to tell future employers about the projects they worked on at E&H—and how that work connects across disciplines, co-curricular activities, personal experiences, and the broader world. The Ampersand Center will help students make those connections.”

Lauder pushed for integrated and project-based learning through the Ampersand Center—a campus resource helping students with internships, connecting with alumni, receiving grants for trips or projects, writing resumés, and presenting academic research and projects to peers.

Lauder also helped the Ampersand Center form a contract with the British company, PebblePad—an ePortfolio platform that allows students to curate a personal portfolio over their time at the college to show the academic work, service projects, research, internships, skills and other experiences for their potential employer or graduate school.

Lauder consistently strived to make students a priority for her and the college.

“Whatever we do, it always comes back to the student,” said Lauder. “When there is a disagreement in a meeting between faculty or administration, I try to remind everyone, ‘We have to remember our students and what is best for them.’”

One of Lauder’s students, Ellen Hicks, remembers Lauder’s influence in the classroom.

“Dr. Lauder was a great professor. I consider myself lucky to have had a class with her. She was intimidating at first, but only because she was so talented and dedicated. She always encouraged me to do my best. I consider her to be a role model.”

According to the E&H website, Lauder received her bachelor’s in English from the University of West Alabama, earned a master’s in public relations from Louisiana State University and obtained her doctorate in communications from the University of Alabama.

According to LinkedIn, Lauder professionally worked for Southern Living magazine as an assistant travel editor, became an independent contractor to write, edit, and consult corporate brands, and worked as an editor for Southern Breeze magazine before deciding to go into academia full time.

She is survived by her husband, Scott Poore, her daughter, Anna Jackson, and her stepson, Tanner Poore.