

Reflections on My Years at Juniata

by Pamela Pollick Babick



My memories of my time at Juniata are not filled with lots of fun activities and happy reminiscing nor of special professors who took me under his/her wing. Mine are of the worst 4 years of my life. I did some deep self-reflecting and have come to realize that it was my fault. I was so insecure and was sure that I didn't belong there. I knew absolutely that my background from a poor country school system did not prepare me and that every other student was smarter and better than I ever could be. I couldn't put myself out there. It was as if I were paralyzed, so I stayed in my comfort zone with the boyfriend and the studying. When I look back on my life now, I realize that I did not participate in life those four years.

Juniata offered me a great education and sent me on a career that I loved. There were opportunities, but I chose or was incapable of joining in. During the rest of my life, before and after Juniata, I have always been involved in high school activities, in my profession, in my personal life/family and in my community.

So, you ask, "Why is she telling us this?" Some may recollect all the fun, friends and activities you experienced. I thought deeply about why I should share this with you, but, I think, some of you already understand, because you, too, had those feelings and identify.

When Becky (Valigorsky Bricen), my roommate for the last three years at Juniata, asked me to join this reunion committee, I hesitated. Those unwelcome feelings of bad memories welled up and sent butterflies through my stomach. Once again, thoughts of insecurity and of little self-worth overwhelmed me. Everyone else will be so successful, with stories of their perfect lives. I didn't belong. Becky persisted, so I said that I could go and check it out.

I am glad she insisted. I love reconnecting with our classmates, spending time working and planning for a great reunion. I have learned I can contribute ideas and learn from the wonderful contributions of others committee members. I marvel at Charlotte, a creative dynamo and organized task master! I am so impressed with Carol, who carefully analyzes situations and questions each detail to make sure our direction is sound. Jane has an acute sense of insight, presenting all angles of a decision. They are our three committee chairs, diligently working to prepare a great event. Our team at Juniata College is wonderful, so approachable, something I never felt at my Juniata years ago. They are willing to help at any time with any detail. President Troha is in, all the way, with every fiber in his body, wanting the best for the students, and you can be sure, it is for EVERY student.

You can see that I am involved with my time, my experiences and my gift. I want to give back to the school that provided a wonderful education. I want to make a difference at Juniata, and I especially want to make a difference for the Juniatians who come after us. Have you felt like me? Do you want to try to get past feelings from 50 years ago?

Come join me! Come join the fun at the reunion! Come share your stories of 50 years!! You won't feel like you don't belong. You are welcome with open arms! Come make new memories and make a difference.