

Dear Future MLS Student,

I am writing to you as I near my end of this 11-month program. This was truly the longest but shortest year I have ever experienced, and it pushed me beyond limits I didn't think I was capable of. But I made it to the end and trust me... if I can do it, then you can too! I'm sure you all know by now that it isn't going to be easy, but it's doable with the right attitude and the willingness to apply yourself. So, I'm here to give you some advice that I wish I knew when I first started the program this time last year.

First off, you need to be willing to apply yourself and put in the effort to succeed. As a student in high school and college, I never really struggled to get good grades and I was confident that this would translate over to the MLS program year as well. However, I quickly learned the hard way that this was not the case. The first rotation moves at such a pace that I was unfamiliar with, and I struggled with staying on schedule. I recommend studying every night, so this does not happen to you as well. However, I understand that this is a lot easier said than done because there will also be days that come along where you feel as though you need a mental break and that is okay too, as long as you use your time wisely in the days that come next.

Secondly, it's extremely important for you to have an "out" or a hobby that you enjoy to get your mind off of all the craziness that this program year will bring. This was hard for me at first because I have never lived so far from friends and family at home. I made sure to keep in contact with everyone through constant calls which really helped me, but I also was able to find my own passions. I would suggest setting aside time for these hobbies because it could help give you something to look forward to if you're in the middle of an exhausting week. This program year is important to your future success, but it's also important for you to keep the relationships you have with those who are close to you. Try not to let the stress of the education year consume you and instead live in the moment, "go with the flow," and enjoy the moments that you do get to have outside of the academics.

Lastly, and probably most importantly, believe in yourself. This year is going to be very difficult, I'm sure you've all accepted that by now. But you've gotten this far in your academics already and there's nothing that can stop you other than yourself. Have faith in the hard work you put forward and know that Michele and Kyle are always there to help you (use their advice!). Keeping a positive mindset throughout this upcoming year is key. Appreciate what you know but learn from what you don't. Keep an open mind and really trust in your abilities. Even on those days where nothing seems to go your way, never give up! Because I'm sitting here after going through it all and can tell you that it is 100% worth it at the end. There's no better feeling than knowing that you gave it your all to succeed and that's something I know you all are capable of.

Good luck, you got this!

Colin, Class of 2024
SUNY Fredonia Graduate