



Graduating senior calls King's experience "life-changing"

June 17, 2024

London, Ontario - King's University College will be proud to watch as Darlene Walker, now 77, will be crossing the stage at Spring Convocation on Tuesday, June 18, 2024, at Western's Alumni Hall.

When she was in her late 60s, Darlene Walker was looking for a purpose in her life. King's Sociology program kept her mind engaged; she was hooked from her very first course.

Walker recently completed her last course and will receive her degree from the school she calls "her happy place."

"My overall experience at King's has been life-changing. I cannot overstate how proud I am to have completed this journey. My family is also proud of me," Walker says.

After the passing of her husband in 2015, Walker, at the age of 68, wasn't sure what she wanted to do next.

However, her daughter-in-law, Suzan Marchand Walker '93, a King's alumna, reminded Darlene that she had always said her only regret was not attending university.

Her daughter-in-law told her how King's campus was smaller and more senior-friendly. One of Walker's granddaughters had also attended King's before heading to Western for her master's degree. A week after the conversation, Walker contacted Waterloo University for the transcripts of the correspondence courses she had taken many years earlier.

She enrolled at King's for the fall of 2016 and chose Sociology because she loves studying people and society. It was also the best fit for her workplace experiences, having worked for several years in Human Resources and Social Services and having a volunteering background.

"My very first course at King's was Sociology 1020, taught by Dr. Tara Bruno [Associate Professor of Sociology] and I was hooked," Walker says. Overall, Walker says the professors were very kind and supportive regarding her real-life contributions to class discussions.

The learning experience for Walker went beyond what her professors taught her. She gained a deeper appreciation for the young people she met at King's. "I believe our future is in good hands. I love the size of the campus and the friendliness of everyone. I was treated with absolute respect the whole time I was there," she says, adding that she enjoyed her interesting professors and classmates.

Walker was appreciative of the counselling and academic supports that King's offers. King's also offered accommodations after Walker had knee replacement surgery.

Now at 77, Walker says she is looking forward to doing some creative writing in the future.

About King's University College

King's University College at Western University is a Canadian liberal arts university college with its roots in the Catholic intellectual tradition. As one of Canada's top university colleges, King's students benefit from a personalized experience, learning in small classes led by outstanding professors, and being part of a close community on a beautiful campus.

King's is recognized, both nationally and internationally, for its excellent academic programs, commitment to research excellence, generous scholarships and comprehensive student services. Offering degree programs in the arts, social sciences, management and social work, King's is home to approximately 3500 full- and part-time students from across Canada as well as 23 other countries. Institutionally autonomous, King's is academically affiliated with Western University, and King's graduates receive a Western University degree.

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