

Why College Is Important to Me

by Elizabeth Parizh

I crossed my fingers and forgot to exhale as the judge walked out with his decision. His robe swayed behind him, marking each step. I winced at each one, and there seemed to be thousands. Finally, just as I was about to jump up and run out of the court room, the judge declared, "The defendant is guilty."

Those four words were what I had been waiting for, and yet I could not believe them when they came. I have just won my first case. It had taken a few years after graduating law school for my firm to trust me with being in charge of one. I had shown myself capable.

The firm had entrusted me with this particular case mainly because of my college education in chemistry. Our client, a doctor was suing a pharmaceutical company about harmful chemical in one of their pills. The doctor had been facing severe penalties for prescribing the pill to his patients, so he decided to sue the source.

I applied my knowledge of chemistry to understand the pill's composition, which helped determine exactly what had caused the complications. I discovered that some of the chemicals, while benign on their own, when combined reacted to form a dangerous substance. The company that sold the pill knew this was a possibility, but preferred to save money by using what they had and didn't believe it was an issue. In the ingredients list, they named the chemicals that would have made the pill safer, which they had used in the more public tests. This is why doctors, including our client, prescribed the pill in the first place.

I prove that, in fact, the practice was hazardous and illegal. I figured out that they were using the cheaper chemicals that reacted in unfortunate ways, and the judge agreed. The company's other products would also be checked for misbranding, and any that contained potentially harmful ingredients would be taken out of pharmacies. The FDA even sent a representative to talk to me about my work keeping patients safe.

I learned a lot about the chemicals in the pill through my undergraduate studies of chemistry, and was happy to be able to apply it to the real world, particularly in the legal field, which has always interested me. It was a culmination of all my knowledge that helped society in the process, and I appreciated it. I could only do this by attending college, where I gathered the information necessary to win the case. A more subtle benefit of college was my ability to deal with the various people involved with the case. I had met and befriended a diverse group of students and professors, which helped me, understand others to better be able to work with them in the future. I learned not only the material but the skills necessary for life while at college. This is the story I would like to be able to tell after graduation from college.