



REID DOYLE

What is your current position?

I am currently a First Class Firefighter with the City of London. Working in the fire service is a rewarding career that draws on many aspects of one's personality. In addition to firefighting, the job involves responding to various rescue situations and medical emergencies and organizing public education campaigns.

**What History program did you take at Western?
What year did you graduate?**

I completed the honours history program in 2005.

How did your History degree prepare you for your current position?

It may sound like a cliché, but a history degree really does teach you how to learn. The communication, critical thinking and reading comprehension skills I gained through my degree are used daily. The nature of the fire service is one of constant change. Improvements in fire code, building technology, vehicle design and construction, etc. all play roles in my job. Having the ability to learn and adapt to these changes is beyond useful, it is necessary.

What would you tell an incoming History student?

Take the time to select the classes you are really interested in. There are so many terrific options available in Western's program and your marks are probably closely linked to how much you engage with each class. Don't avoid demanding classes. In fact, my highest marks were in some of the courses that required the most work.

Make sure to have a balanced education. Social skills are also a valuable tool to be developed and refined during your university career. However, you'll never have the chance to use them professionally if weaknesses in your academic record limit your career choices or advancement. So make sure to balance the time you spend in the library and with your friends.

Make sure to get involved with campus activities. I was fortunate enough to have joined the Student Emergency Response Team while at Western. At the time I couldn't have told you that my extracurricular experiences there would directly affect my career choices, but they are responsible for my position today. You never know which experience will inspire you and which opportunity will lead to a career.

Any other thoughts or comments?

If you've taken the time to read this poster in the Department hallway I can guarantee that you and I have a lot in common. My wife constantly harasses me for reading every tourist plaque we see on vacation. That's the great thing about History students, while we may be an eclectic group with different backgrounds and experiences we are united by our interest in others' stories. We enjoy debate, tend to read exclusively nonfiction and watch documentaries in our spare time.

The last thing History students have in common is that every one of us has been asked: What are you going to do with a history degree? My response to you: Do whatever you want. I couldn't have told you that I was going to be a firefighter when I was an undergrad. Life has the ability to surprise you, so keep your eyes open and take advantage of opportunities that come your way.