

For the love of numbers

Trisha Klingensmith was about a year in to achieving an accounting degree through the My Cook Pathway program when she was approached about working as a cost analyst at Cook Vandergrift. Keep reading to find out more about her experience thus far.

Tell me a little bit about yourself. How long have you been at Cook Vandergrift?

I've been with Cook Vandergrift a little over six years. I started in the Pipette department and was there for about four of those six years. I was in the Shipping department as a group leader for one year. I am currently the finance analyst. I've been in that role since September of 2021.

How did the switch from working in Shipping to working in Finance come about?

They were looking to fill the role of finance analyst for a little while. I am not sure of the details, but I knew they couldn't find someone for the position, and they knew I was going to school for accounting. Our general manager came up to me and asked if I was interested in the position and I said, "Yes, of course!" So that is how that got started.

Talk about the degree you are pursuing and why you chose it.

It is a bachelor's in accounting, and it is more focused on the business side of accounting. I am about three quarters of the way through. I plan to graduate in October.

I love working with numbers. I enjoyed math in high school and that was always my favorite subject. The business part of the accounting field is new to me, but I am really enjoying it.

What class has been your favorite thus far?

I am in one right now for managerial accounting and we are only two weeks in. It relates very much to my role as finance analyst. The course focuses on manufacturing companies, and while I am not too far into the class right now, I think it will be one of my favorite classes because I can relate to it easily.



▲ Trisha Klingensmith with her makeshift desk.

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How have you been able to use the knowledge that you have gained so far in your day-to-day work?

I definitely use what I have learned thus far everyday—like the business terms, for example. Even now, the class talks about manufacturing costs and that is something that I look at everyday somehow, somehow.

What has juggling your school work and day job been like? Do you have any tips?

Time management is definitely key. I have always been like that. I always try to find certain times of day to devote to school in the evening. I usually set aside an hour or two a day at least during the week and then devote more time on the weekend. That is just the way my schedule works. To come up with a good plan and stick to it is probably the best advice I have for going through this process.

Do you think going back to school is something you would have been able to do without the help of the My Cook Pathway program?

The program was definitely a catalyst for me to go back to school, for sure. I probably wouldn't have gone back if it wasn't an option.

What goals do you have looking into the next five years?

I really just want to keep improving in my role as finance analyst, since I am learning it from the ground up.

What advice would you give to other employees who are considering using the My Cook Pathway program?

If you are thinking about it, I would definitely advise you to go through with it. I go through Purdue University Global. I really enjoy the way that they handle their schooling. I think it is organized pretty well once you get the hang of it, and they are very helpful.

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