

Helping Those with LD Find Healthy Outcomes

Blain Namm '00 has a goal to help others with LD navigate health and educational systems.

By Chris Lenois

Blain Namm '00 is one of LC's most engaged alumni.

He has attended the College's fundraising galas in New York City—a short trip to midtown Manhattan for the native New Yorker, and a perfect opportunity to stay connected with former classmates and faculty, whom he still considers among his closest friends.

"At Landmark, I found a place where I felt embraced for all aspects of who I am as a person. It is an amazing school that will always hold a special place in my heart," says Blain.

Much of Blain's career path has been focused on getting other people to have a similarly holistic outlook about themselves and their lives. A licensed master social worker and a certified alcohol and substance abuse counselor, Blain recently founded Behavioral Health Navigation (BHN), a consulting service that helps individuals and families secure the best treatment for specific challenges related to addiction, mental health, and learning differences.

"I was inspired based on both my personal and professional experiences, and I am passionate about helping my clients navigate a behavioral health system that is complex and at times overwhelming,

with the goal of providing them the same feeling of guidance and support that I felt when I was at Landmark," Blain says.

Even though Blain's educational experience included spending his elementary school years at Manhattan's Churchill School, which is dedicated to serving students with learning differences, he credits Landmark College for showing him he could embrace his learning style and advocate for what he needed to grow as a student. While assistive technologies and the extra attention afforded by small classes were crucial, the most useful tool was recognition of his own limitations. "I learned the value of asking for help," Blain says. "As I was learning how to learn, having cheerleaders and support systems made challenges easier to overcome."

Blain drew on those lessons frequently while getting his bachelor's in psychology at Connecticut College and his master's in social work at Columbia University. Not surprisingly, he learned the professional world can be just as unaccommodating—which is why he founded BHN, and why he says he is heartened by the career development programs LC has implemented.

"Landmark gave me the knowledge and confidence to do this, and to not give up when faced with obstacles," Blain says. "That is why it's important for current students to understand how to navigate the world, have internships and work experience, and then find their way in the workforce with whatever challenges they face." 🐾

Photo by Suzanne Sutcliffe Photography



Blain Namm '00 with Academic Advisor Denise Manning Higgins at LC's 2014 "Uncut Diamonds" Gala Fundraiser in New York City.