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My Choice: A Career in Accounting

Nancy E. Davis

It is indeed a privilege and an honor to have been invited as a guest today. I was asked to speak for a few minutes to share with you my reasons for choosing accounting as a career, and, after having completed my first two years of college, to explain my career objectives at this time.

Upon entering high school, my goal was to prepare for a secretarial position. I thought then that every American girl dreams of the day when she will marry her wealthy boss's son. I studied shorthand, typing, and general office practice, but I quickly decided this was not the type of job in which I would be happy. I did not dislike the secretarial courses, but as I studied bookkeeping, I found that each day it became more and more interesting. In doing my home assignments, I started devoting more and more time to my bookkeeping because I found it both stimulating and challenging.

I researched the various professions that would permit me to further my new-found interest in the business world and decided that accounting was for me. It followed naturally that I would like to attend Bentley College because of its fine reputation in the accounting field. I was warned, however, by my guidance counsellor, a male counsellor incidentally, that accounting was not particularly a woman's field. But, being independent in thought and slightly riled by his admonition, I ignored his warning and applied for admission to Bentley.

As I progressed through my first year of college, I found, much to my surprise, that accounting was not the simple bookkeeping procedure of "debits to the left, credits to the right, subtract the tax, and there's your net profit!" The subject of accounting proved to be fascinating and continued to provide the challenge I sought.

During my sophomore year at Bentley, my instructors devoted considerable time to explaining the various facets of accounting practice and described the different career opportunities that are available to those who become adequately competent. Public accounting soon became my goal. Faculty members at Bentley, including personnel of the Dean's office for whom I worked part-time, encouraged me to aim for the CPA certificate, assuring me that I had the ability, and that, if I would work hard enough, the opportunities for me could be limitless.

As one of ten children, however, I felt I could not expect my parent to finance four years of college as my brothers and sisters would also have to be assisted. For this reason, after two years of Day Division study, I decided to work days and with my earnings finance the remainder of my course work in the evening division.

By working, I also feel I will be able to utilize the principles of accounting I have studied thus far, realizing that it is one thing to be able to work problems from a textbook and do home assignments, but completely different to be able to apply theoretical principles to actual practice.

When I decided to become a career woman, I asked myself whether or not I could successfully combine a career with marriage. I am still searching for the answer. If and when the time comes that I shall have to make such a decision, I hope I will find it not too great a task to be a wife, mother, and accountant, and to be successful at all three. In my mind, a woman's family must come first and her career second, but I have seen many instances where women were able to successfully combine both family and career responsibilities and I hope that I will be able to number myself among this group. It is my sincere opinion that in a society such as ours a woman's place is no longer only in the home.

Needless to say, I have chosen accounting as my career. It is difficult to express my inner feelings on the subject of accounting for in a very real sense accounting has become a vital and meaningful part of my life—the way in which I hope to make my mark in the world. To me, accounting is a field in which one becomes aware of the responsibilities, the pride, the personal achievement inherent in a profession embodying the nucleus of the American economy.

My sincerest thanks, once again, for inviting me. Although I have received much encouragement to enter the accounting profession, there were still many doubts in my mind; but after being permitted to participate in this most impressive meeting today, you have given me the stimulus to try my very best to follow in your footsteps and, hopefully, some day in the near future to join with you as a member of this organization.