

Accounting for a Solid Base

Paul College senior has a plan

Thursday, April 19, 2018



LAWSON MARTINEZ '18

Sometimes choosing a major comes down to what makes sense. For Lawson Martinez '18, that has meant not only pursuing [business administration with an accounting option](#) at the Peter T. Paul College of Business and Economics but deciding to return next fall to get his master's degree.

It's a matter of what will open the most doors, says Martinez, who knew when he was in high school that, for him, business was the way to do that. He'd done a little work for his mother's niche marketing company and liked it, so he started at UNH in that

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major before changing his focus.

“Accounting is a good path; you can go into almost any industry,” Martinez says of settling on his field. “And I had a professor last semester who talked about the earning potential, so that was good to hear.”

At first, Martinez thought he would go right to work after graduation. And why not? His odds of getting a job were high: Accounting is consistently listed as one of the top 10 best business jobs for new graduates by [U.S. News and World Report](#). But taking a course with Catherine Plante, associate professor of accounting, changed his mind.

“She encouraged me to continue on to pursue my master’s in accounting and wrote me a letter of recommendation for a scholarship that I applied for,” Martinez says.

“Accounting is a good path; you can go into almost any industry.”

“Employees with master’s degrees are pretty sought after, so it feels like a good plan that will give me a solid base.”

The Connecticut native had considered other New England schools along with Paul College, but a visit to Durham made the decision for him.

“As soon as I came here, I knew it was the place for me. The Paul program has been really great. My experience at UNH has been amazing, if not a little eclectic,” Martinez says.

He’s talking about the job he’s had at the horse barns for the last four years. And the course he’s taking in equine studies, where he is the only senior in a class made up of mostly first-year students.

“Working at the horse barns has been a great learning and growing experience for me,” Martinez says. “I went in not knowing anything. I had zero experience.”

That's right: He didn't have a horse, didn't ride, didn't grow up around horses. It was just something that caught his attention when he was looking at work options as a freshman, and he thought it might be interesting. So, he applied and was put on a waiting list. When a Sunday morning shift became available, he took it.

"I fell in love with all that's involved," Martinez says of the barn chores that include mucking stalls (there are 45 in all), morning horse grooming and noon feedings. "It's been fascinating, even though it's meant getting up early Sunday mornings."

That level of enthusiasm seems to have been part of his entire experience at UNH. Martinez describes a religion and literature course as one of "the best, most involved class discussions I allowed myself to get into." Studying abroad in Edinburgh, Scotland, he took Celtic civilization along with his accounting courses. And the other countries he got to visit while he was there made a lasting impression on him.

"I went from essentially never leaving the East Coast to spending half a semester in another country and traveling to all these other great places," Martinez says. "It was truly eye-opening."

Now, as commencement nears, Martinez finds himself "getting a bit grossly nostalgic."

"I've made friends with people I'll probably be friends with for life. I still live with my freshman roommate, who I hadn't met until I got here. It's gone so fast, it doesn't seem possible that it's almost over," he says, adding, "It's one of those things that isn't real until it is."

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The stories are written by the staff of **UNH Communications and Public Affairs**.

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