



Wind Woods

Southern Oregon University

Age: 25

Year: Senior

Major: English

Goal: to become a professional playwright and to teach writing

Wind's love of theatre arts and writing started in childhood, when from a living room "theatre" he would direct his five siblings as cast-members in his own plays. At age 25, it is clear that Wind's leadership skills and writing skills have flourished in Southern Oregon University's Theatre and English departments. When he graduated from high school in 1998, in Southern Oregon, he chose first to go to film school at the Art Academy of San Francisco rather than a 4-year college, but soon found that he wanted to achieve the foundation of an undergraduate degree before specializing. He returned to Southern Oregon, where he started his general education coursework at Rogue Community College, moving to dual-enrollment with SOU and Rogue, and ultimately transferring full time to SOU for his major coursework. His family wasn't able to assist him with his educational cost, but with the help of a Diversity scholarship, need-based financial aid, the cost savings of dual-enrollment, and by working a number of part time jobs, he is now close to graduation. He will complete his BA in English and creative writing, and is confident that his education is preparing him soundly for a future in the arts. He plans to attend an MFA program after graduation, and eventually to become a professor of writing and a professional playwright. He says of the SOU English Department, "They have jewels of professors, and you get to work with them so intimately here." He has also enjoyed the small classes and the myriad benefits of working with the Ashland Shakespeare Festival, which include internships with the festival, guest speakers, and other cultural programs. While Wind is currently ASSOU President, and has also served as the Director of Multi-cultural relation and the Black Student Union President, he has not always been extroverted with his professors. One of his main challenges in college was learning to take the initiative to communicate individually with instructors. The first professor he visited during office hours was Dennis Smith, who Wind now names as one of his most inspiring teachers. Needless to say, Professor Smith was extremely approachable and interesting, and Wind kept coming back. He says jokingly that now professors have to kick him out of office hours, he's there so often. Wind now spends free time reading his professors' dissertations and books in order to foster greater dialogue, and sees his education as a partnership with his professors and the institution.