

SIUE's Snyders sisters accelerated education helps them pursue dreams together

by Megan Wieser
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EDWARDSVILLE - The Snyders sisters from Jerseyville have always been motivated to advance through higher education and achieve their career aspirations.

Together, they are attending Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, and though one is an undergraduate and one a graduate student, their accelerated academic paths have them slated to graduate together in May 2019.

“Ellen’s always been my role model,” said 18-year-old Anne Snyders, a junior majoring in business administration. She followed in her sister’s footsteps and pursued concurrent enrollment during high school. Anne achieved her high school diploma and her associate’s degree just months apart in 2017, entering SIUE as a junior.

“Our parents have always pushed both of us, and encouraged us to challenge ourselves and not always take the easiest route,” Anne explained.

The two are their strongest competitors and best supporters. They are roommates and coworkers at SIUE’s Testing Services in the Student Success Center.

Ellen Snyders says the sisters do draw a line in their similarities though. “She almost went into my major, and I said, ‘you can’t do that. That’s not going to work,’” she joked, as Anne smiled next to her.

“Really, we’ve just always given it our all when it’s come to anything we’ve done,” 20-year-old Ellen said. “Due to my accelerated path, I’ll be achieving my graduate degree in speech-language pathology in four years, instead of the standard six.”

Both are happy to be working to complete degrees from highly regarded programs that they say will help them achieve their future goals.

“I love the smallness of SIUE,” Ellen said. “It’s close to home, and I’ve enjoyed all of my professors.”

“I like SIUE a lot,” Anne added. “The School of Business is an accredited business school, which was important to me.”

Not to mention, they are pursuing their dreams, together.

“I’ve always looked up to Ellen. I’ve probably wanted to be around her a little more than she wanted,” Anne laughed. “But, I don’t think I would’ve known what was possible to achieve without her making those initial steps.”