

The GW Journal

Volume III, No. 4, November 2001

views and voices

grin and
BERIN, It

by Erin Fox



As I was thinking about my column for this month, I realized I just couldn't write about filing complaints about J Street service. At the risk of sounding like an excerpt from Chicken Soup for the Soul, I just have to tell you how my life was changed riding around D.C. in a bright green RV, and got a little advice of my own.

I was lucky enough to meet up with a group of four twentysomethings called roadtripNATION. They are traveling around the country interviewing successful people and sharing their experience with college students they meet along the way. They are filming everything in hopes of making a documentary that will reach even more college students with advice from the real "real world."

During the three days I spent with them, I got to know the most incredible leaders. In the end, I realized all the people, from the lawyer-turned-baker to Justice Sandra

Day O'Connor, were saying the same thing: Trust yourself. They never gave up their faith in what they knew of themselves.

One of lobbyist Morris Reid's first jobs in D.C. was to carry purses for his idol's mother. When no law firms would hire Justice O'Connor because she was a woman, she offered to work unpaid, next to the secretary since they didn't have an office for her. Rick Allen, CEO of National Geographic Ventures, started off as a lawyer and changed careers many times. When I asked him what he did when he was afraid he said, "Sometimes you just have to jump."

I was surprised while traveling with them how much I didn't know about D.C. Besides learning about how to park an RV on 21st Street,

I discovered places I had never been: The Supreme Court, Howard University, and offices in an area I was convinced only contained Tequila-Grill. There's so much beyond GW, and all it takes is a jump and then you'll discover more opportunities than you ever know existed. Who knows, maybe after you've looked around, you'll see that you actually

always wanted to go to culinary school instead of law school. There's no wrong road; there's only the one that's perfect for you.

In the end, no one's going to care but you, and this is what successful people realize. But

that doesn't mean you're on your own. When you're lost or wondering how you're going to manage to jump, talk to someone. ♦

There's no
wrong road;
there's only the
one that's
perfect for you.