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# VADA ALUMNI - HEATHER-CLAIRE NORTEY

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I have always wanted to be an actor. I also started dancing Ballet when I was very young and since then I've trained in and taught Jazz, Hip Hop, Modern Dance, Lyrical, Praise Dance, Musical Theatre Choreography, and Contemporary Dance. I was a Dance Major in High School.

I would borrow acting technique and screen acting books and videos from the library. Then during March Break and summer holidays, I'd write notes about acting and watch films. I was dancing forty hours a week, taking acting for film and television classes and drama classes, working with an agent, auditioning, and taking casting director workshops all while in high school.

After high school, I earned a Bachelor of Arts Honors Degree with Specialization in Theatre. I still trained in film and television, auditioned and worked in theatre and film, and continued dancing & choreographing. I then completed VADA's Dramatic Arts Diploma Program, followed by the Post-Dramatic Arts Management

Program. VADA helped me learn more about the film industry. Since then, I have continued to train, work on my acting, and bring characters to life on set.

I booked the first audition I had after graduation. Since then, I have booked other roles including a Guest Starring role in "The Haunting Hour" (Episode: "Stage Fright"), a Supporting role in the Lifetime Network movie "The Pregnancy Project", and a Lead role in the Lifetime Movie "Abducted: The Carlina White Story" as young Joy White. "Abducted" meant a lot to me. I loved the character and story, had the wonderful opportunity to work with an amazing cast including Aunjanue Ellis ("Quantico"), and I grew as an actor.

Acting is an opportunity for me to put myself in situations I've never been in and use my own experience to tell stories that influence, engage, uplift, and educate people. As challenging as the work can be, I LOVE it and feel inspired. There have been films that inspired me throughout my life. "The Blind Side" is a brilliant example of a movie about someone who struggled through life and later had tremendous success. The film inspired me to create work that encourages people to reach out to one another. I was also inspired by the film "Hidden Figures". In addition, Viola Davis and Denzel Washington are actors that I admire very much, not only because of their dedication and amazing work in their craft, but also in terms of the types of stories they choose to tell.

My advice for those considering acting is to study the craft of acting and learn to make your work a practice of discovering and making choices for yourself. Learn more about yourself and experience life. Finally, be open and have fun.