

Alumna to open 2014 Bernstein Women of Influence Speaker Series

11/10/14

Melissa Pritchard, a 2001 alumna of Alfred University, will share her experiences on a 15,000-mile bicycle trip that took her from Barcelona, Spain, to Eugene, OR, during the opening lecture in the 2014 Pamela Lavin Bernstein Women of Influence Speaker Series, hosted by the Women&s Leadership Center. Her talk is scheduled for 7 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 11, at the Judson Leadership Center on the Alfred University campus.

Pritchard took a sabbatical from her teaching position at The Benjamin Franklin International School in Barcelona, Spain to bike to her hometown of Eugene, OR. She had planned on arriving home just in time for her birthday in October and she made it! The trip took her through four continents, more than 15 countries, and over 24,000 kilometers (about 15,000 miles). Pritchard documented her trip through her blog, which can be found at <http://theloongwayhome.bl...>

“People wondered how I pedaled 70 miles a day for 14 months and admired my energy, but I don't understand how they don't want to get on a bike and pedal all day,” said Pritchard. “Some friends of mine were joking, suggesting that I organize a bikers anonymous group to cope with the withdrawal symptoms I'm experiencing.”

Each year, the Women&s Leadership Center hosts several high profile speakers to discuss topics related to leadership, women, career strategies, or social/global issues as part of the Women of Influence Speaker Series. This year, for the first time, the series is supported by an endowed fund. Pamela Lavin Bernstein, class of &71 and a founding member of the Women&s Leadership Center (WLC) at Alfred University, made a gift to the University to support the Women of Influence Speaker Series. The proceeds from the endowed gift allow the WLC to bring in at least one “high-profile” speaker each year, in addition to the speakers, including alumni and faculty who volunteer to be part of the annual series, which was renamed in Bernstein&s honor.