
Laurie Cotton '05 Alumnus

At Florida Atlantic University

Major: History

DEGREE: M.A. in History from Florida Atlantic University in 2005.

CURRENT POSITION: Academies Coordinator, Royal Palm Beach High School



FIRST JOB: My real first job (at 14) was scooping ice cream at Holden's in Peabody, Massachusetts. My first teaching position after graduating with a B.A. in History was teaching Social Studies to 6th, 7th, and 8th graders at St. Joseph's Episcopal School in Boynton Beach, Florida.

BIGGEST CHALLENGES: Not all secondary teachers have had the opportunity to earn a master's degree. A big challenge is to secure funding in order to provide quality professional development to help build capacity among teaching professionals.

BEST FAU MEMORY: It was truly an honor to receive the John O'Sullivan Travel Grant. The first recipient, Michael Ray, was a classmate of mine. At the urging of my professors, I traveled to Exeter College, Oxford U.K. to study British history and politics. There I conducted research in the Bodleian Library and had the opportunity to meet and interview Lord Morgan, peer and author of several books in my thesis bibliography. It was the thrill of a lifetime.

ROLE DEPT. OF HISTORY PLAYED IN YOUR CAREER: The history program played a profound role in my career on several levels. Matriculation was not something I planned, and it was the first degree program that I completed "just for me." As a history teacher, the opportunity to deepen my own content knowledge and practice the skills of historical inquiry was significant. Shortly after graduation, I became the Social Studies curriculum administrator for the School District of Palm Beach County. I was hired as an adjunct faculty member first at Broward College and later Palm Beach State College.

GOAL: To spend my remaining years with the School District of Palm Beach County engaged in pursuits directly related to young people. I enjoy teaching history at the college level and will continue to do that as long as I am able.

Favorite Book: *Trinity* by Leon Uris

PERSONAL: Laurie and her husband David live in Lake Worth. Their daughter Delaney is a student at Alexander Dreyfoos School of the Arts in West Palm Beach. They have traveled extensively and spend as much time as budget and schedule permit doing so.