

# Pursue your passion, magazine writer, alum tells students

**BY SOPHIE TORCELLO**

VN SPECIAL WRITER

From the Varsity News to living her dream in New York City, Yvette Stines has taken a varied journey in journalism and communication.

Stines has always had a passion for writing but it took her awhile to find her career path.

Graduating from Detroit Mercy in 2000 with a degree in communication studies, she decided to continue her studies and attend law school to become an entertainment attorney.

It didn't take Stines long to realize that a life in law was not calling her.

"I always knew what I wanted to do, and I just didn't do it," she said.

Like a blessing in disguise, Stines developed her passion for freelance writing in law school.

Much like the column she wrote in the Varsity News, Stines wanted to continue writing about health, wellness and self-development.

"I didn't know how to write a good pitch letter in law school. During roughly 2006, I really knuckled down and learnt how to write a good pitch letter, so I was able to sell my work to any editor that wanted it," she explained.

With her experience growing, Stines found herself working on public relations campaigns and writing alongside other journalists.

Her first big break led to her ultimate dream: living in New York City.

"I had visited New York a few times to cover Fashion Week and just fell in love with the city," she said. "On one of my breaks at a café nearby, I was approached by editors at Jones Magazine, who had read my work, and I eventually fell into a job there."

Stines describes her role as being extremely intense, working as a digital editor and social content manager.

"I was editing almost 24 stories a day, as well as writing my own content for the magazine," she said. "It was a lot of work, but I loved it because it is always what I have wanted to do."

After three years of living in New York, Stines decided to return home to Farmington Hills to look after her mother, who has had health problems.

She is currently working for Essence magazine in the public relations digital media sector, writing all things beauty.

As well as this, she still writes freelance pieces on health and wellness.

Her bylines have appeared in Black Enterprise, The Source and other publications. She also has self-published two books.

When asked how to be a successful freelancer, she offered some advice.

“Find what you want to write about and research publications that create this sort of work,” she said. “Use Twitter. It's your biggest tool to finding current editors. Master a good pitch letter, and you are set. It may not happen straight away, but with more experience it will come,” she said.

In ten years, Stines said she expects to still be writing her pieces on health and wellness.

“Writing is something you can never be too old for,” she said, “and I think I will still be doing it for a long time to come.”