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than major

Seven stories

Students tell how the
full Madison Experience
changed their present
and their future

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MIKE MIRIELLO ('09M)
WITH SUBMITTED PHOTOS BY FEATURED STUDENTS
PAGE 27 PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRIS MEYERS ('11)

Challenging conventional wisdom on the value of a degree

Public dialogue on the current state of higher education has warped ideas about how colleges and universities should prepare students for their futures. Notions that only technical and professional programs are needed to equip students with what they need to thrive, or that learners can attain an equivalent education purely online are gaining acceptance.

Meanwhile, a growing body of evidence demonstrates that these ideas fall far short. Plus, a movement among employers advocating for broader experiences in higher education is gaining momentum. They want graduates who can think critically and who know how to solve problems. They need innovators who act ethically despite ambiguities. In essence, employers want the skills imbued by a broad and liberal education.

Linda Halpern, JMU vice president for University Programs, writes, "Our program is designed to address a number of interconnected goals — development of a broad, integrative and liberating education; foundational preparation for a major; and the opportunity to develop and practice the habits of sound reasoning and productive communication that form the basis for full engagement in life and work."

On the following pages, meet seven students whose experiences at Madison reveal just how JMU is changing them *and* their futures. **ME**

See www.jmu.edu/admissions for the complete text of Linda Halpern's answer to the question: "Why does JMU place so much emphasis on its General Education Program?"

THE **M**ADISON **E**XPERIENCE