Alumni Spotlight: Lainey Woo

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"We are all human and we all make mistakes. Be forgiving, especially to yourself. Be kind. Be gentle"—Lainey Woo

When did you graduate? What is your nickname? What is something that you’ve accomplished since you’ve graduated that you’re proud of?

I graduated in the spring of 2018. My nickname is Lainey. I’m proud of how frequently I have been paid to act since graduating. The first time I was ever paid to do something in the field I graduated in was the end of my senior year and now I have done it several times! It feels pretty great knowing that my craft wasn’t a waste of time.

Could tell us a little about your journey after you left USU Theatre Arts and how you ended up where you are now?

I basically moved straight to NYC after graduating. I have gotten a lot of financial help from my family though, so I understand this may not be an option for everyone. I exclusively do acting for the camera now. Commercials, music videos, mini series, short films, and features. I always knew that I wanted to act for the camera so once I graduated I put all my focus there.

Tell us more about the work that you’re doing now? What is a typical day like for you these days?

My days usually involve physical therapy. Those that know me know that I have quite a few health issues. I figure I should tackle those while I am young and have energy. I try to go to the gym on the days I don’t have PT. It helps with depression and also I work at a gym so I feel a little obligated to work out there. I do my best to apply to roles on Backstage everyday. Even if I just tell myself that I’m going to spend 30 minutes on backstage instead of applying to EVERYTHING I could possibly be in. Sometimes it can be overwhelming when you have a lot of things to apply for.

How did your time in USU Theatre Arts help prepare you for the world? What skill or attribute would you say that without USU Theatre Arts you may not have obtained?

I’m so glad that down-endings were beaten out of me at USU. The amount of people I work with that do not drive to the end of the line kills me. I also always hear Jason Spelbring’s voice in the back of my head telling me that 5 minutes is on time, on time is late, late is unacceptable.

What are some of your favorite memories during your time in the USU Theatre Arts program?

I’m so glad that down-endings were beaten out of me at USU. The amount of people I work with that do not drive to the end of the line kills me. I always loved my time spent in the costume shop. And having breakfast during class.
What advice would you give to a potential USU Theatre Arts student?

Create an emotional safety net for yourself. It’s a tough program and it’s easy to feel really garbage. If you have people you can lean on, it helps a lot. That includes making friends outside of the program. I understand this can be difficult because we spend all our time in the theatre building. I started dancing and found some of my closest friends there. Good luck. You are stronger than you think. There is no shame in crying, but don’t let it consume you. (Crying is not acting -Leslie) Loosen your corset if you can’t breath. It may seem like people are out to get you, but most of the time they want the best for you. We are all human and we all make mistakes. Be forgiving, especially to yourself. Be kind. Be gentle.

Lainey Woo's Personal Website