

Where growth is fueled by ambition and drive

By Ian Cohen

Ellie Varrone considers her single mother to be her most important role model. Varrone observed her mother handle responsibility and make sacrifices while providing support to their family without ever abandoning her goals for their children. Her mother shared with Ellie that she missed out on college attendance which taught Ellie about facing challenges and seizing opportunities from an early age. The lessons she received through her mother's determined behavior and daily work became the base which drove Ellie to pursue all opportunities her mother lacked.

“My mother never attended college outside of home but she made sure I could experience that opportunity,” Varrone said.

Varrone developed her ability to express herself confidently because she was the middle child between two brothers. Her mother provided support which enabled her to attend Syracuse University to study public relations at the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications as an 18-year-old sophomore. She found her interest in communications when she handled multiple social media accounts during her time at high school. Public relations became her preferred field because it united creative work with relationship development which aligned with the values her mother showed through childhood by being empathetic and connected and present for others.

Ellie received continuous support from her mother which prepared her to act when she joined Newhouse. She chose to work at Hill Communications because this student-run PR

agency operated as the largest firm based at her university. She worked as a freshman intern at Hill Communications where she managed client accounts and maintained social media presence for Honeycomb Bakery and Crazy Daisies Café & Garden Shop.

“I believe social media stands as my strongest area in public relations so I will continue developing my abilities to link people and brands,” Varrone said.

Running serves as her stress management tool for academic work while skiing enables her to maintain a link to her childhood winter experiences at home. The Syracuse winter season brings back memories of her childhood environment while maintaining the support system which keeps her grounded. She plans to move up to an account associate position at Hill Communications during this semester to work with Real Chemistry PR which operates as a worldwide health care public relations agency. The health care PR experience at Real Chemistry PR will help her gain essential knowledge about her future career in this field. She joins the Public Relations Student Society of America to establish industry connections while completing client-based work that helps her develop professional skills.

Varrone demonstrates his mother's teachings about being strong and thankful through all his achievements. She understands her professional development has just begun but she understands exactly what drives her forward. Ellie follows the example of her mother who showed strength during the process of creating career possibilities for her daughter. Ellie draws her motivation from her mother because she established a path which led to her daughter's achievement.