

## Alumni Spotlight featuring Jeff Mayo



Jeff Mayo, 61, of Greensburg, attended Westmoreland County Community College from 1983-1986 and is our featured alumnus.

So what made Mayo want to attend Westmoreland after high school?

“What made me decide to attend the college was the location and the price. I was not sure if I had the financial means to attend college, so I took a gap year (before that term was even a thing). I worked in a restaurant in Greensburg for one year before I decided to attend the college. The price and location of Westmoreland were very important to me since I didn’t receive a scholarship and I had to pay for college myself,” Mayo said.

While at the college, Mayo first started by majoring in Computer Science. This was at a time when everyone thought that computer science was a major of the future. Once he started classes, he found that computer science wasn’t for him. He had always wanted to be a Pennsylvania State Trooper since he was young and decided to major in criminal justice.

After graduating, he went to IUP to study criminology since criminal justice was his major at Westmoreland.

Did Mayo have a favorite instructor?

“Dr. Lemuel Molovinsky was my favorite professor. He was extremely enthusiastic and would jump on top of his desk and run around the room when he wanted to make a point. I found his class interesting and enjoyable because of his style,” Mayo said. “I just really liked him as a person and felt he enjoyed what he was doing. He was also the first professor that made me feel smart and that used blue essay books for tests, which I did better on than multiple choice. He was a good man and I love history.”

When looking back at his college days, the memories that stick out the most would be playing intramural basketball and football. Those were the two sports that he remembers being offered so he just did them both. There were no coaches, just a bunch of friends having fun playing. That’s what he liked about it.

Since graduating from Westmoreland, what has Mayo’s journey been like?

Mayo states, “I am retired from the Federal Air Marshal Service. But before that, I attended IUP and earned my bachelor's degree. After graduating, I worked a short time as an Adult Probation Officer with Westmoreland County. I then accepted a position with the U.S. Secret Service on March 14, 1989. I worked with the USSS for 13 years. After September 11, 2001, there were many positions with the Federal Air Marshal Service (FAMS) opened. I was now married and had a family. I accepted this position as a FAM so I could return to the Pittsburgh area to raise my children close to our families. I worked my last 12 years of my federal law enforcement career as a FAM in the Pittsburgh Field Office and retired on May 31, 2014. Currently, I am the head coach of the Hempfield Area High School Cross Country Team. I am also an assistant coach with

both the Indoor and Outdoor Track & Field Teams at Hempfield Area. This has been the most fun that I ever had working. I really enjoy working with young people.”

How did Westmoreland prepare Mayo for his career?

Mayo said that the college prepared him the most with his writing and oral communication skills which are skills that you can use at any job.

Behind the scenes, Mayo has some supporters that he would like to thank.

“I’d like to mention my wife Pam; my daughter Tori (physician assistant-PA); my son Gavin (entrepreneur); my other son Lukas (student); and my dog Kona,” said Mayo.

Mayo is also active in his community. He is involved in his church, coaching and the Police Rod & Gun club. In his spare time, he enjoys running, bicycling, hiking, gardening and reading.

His advice to current college students?

“I’d consider double majoring or minoring in another major. Things change in life and it is good to be able to make career changes,” said Mayo. “Also, you can save a lot of money attending a community college and it may also give you time to figure out what career path that you would like to take. I was not ready to attend college right out of high school, so I sat out a year. Westmoreland gave me a chance to try out college at a reasonable price.”

