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Kristina Dehlin and Megan Win

Kris Dehlin 2016

Illinois Wesleyan University

Megan Win 2016

Illinois Wesleyan University

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Oral History Interview with Kristina Dehlin and Megan Win, October 6, 2018

Kristina Dehlin: (giggling)...Hi, my name is Kristina Dehlin. Today is October 06, 2018. I am from the class of 2016. My majors were Philosophy and English – Writing and I was a member of Kappa Delta sorority. I was involved with Tributaries Literary arts journal, and I was a founding member of the IWU happy club.

Megan Win: Hello! My name is Megan Win. Today is still October 06, 2018. I majored in Music and Psychology and for music my instrument was voice. Christina and I founded the happy club so that was a pretty big one that we were involved in, also Kappa Delta sorority. I also was a part of Delta Omicron music professional fraternity, co-choir, vocal jazz... oh, I would say that we were also involved in the hooping club...

Dehlin: -oh, yeah –

Win: ...Which was sort of an informal club, but we went every Monday, so I feel like we were a part of that. I was a part of swing dancing and JM7 the improve troop. There are probably more but whatever. And our year here were both 2012 to 2016. I guess this one is interesting. What qualities drew you to Wesleyan? Why did I come here... umm... from a logistical standpoint, I came because they offered me the most money but I liked the fact that I could do both of my majors, music and psychology, and I felt like there is a nice community here and a nice environment where I knew I wouldn't be more – I would be more than just a number and I wanted to have an experience where I went to a school that was small enough where I wasn't just a number but not so small that ...everybody knew my business.

Dehlin: Yeah, I had similar reasons in that I knew I wanted a small school. I was debating between Wesleyan and a city school and I just had kind of a good gut feeling about Wesleyan. I didn't know for sure what I wanted to study so I liked the liberal arts aspect in that you really get to study a lot of subjects and kind of find your path, so that really interested me as well. And I am so glad I made the right choice.

Win: Yeah, same. We always talk about how grateful we are to go to Wesleyan, to have gone to Wesleyan, to have met the people that we did, which I think is very unique to this school. I feel like, there's... I don't know – I mean, everybody is different but there's the same drive and ambition and willingness to connect with others that I feel like is common among Wesleyanites.

Dehlin: Yeah, I think that is unique here, especially the willingness to connect to others like on tours here, as a high schooler, I feel like you notice students talking to you, to each other in a way that's different at a big school like that I didn't see. And in a way that's different from how some of my high school friends speak about their college campuses and I do think that feels like a universal feeling between Wesleyan students, like, just on the drive down here for homecoming, we were talking about how much all of us love Wesleyan, talking about how much we loved our time here and just want everyone to feel that way.

(Both giggle)

Win: Yeah, for example, our one friend that we drove with, she was working at her restaurant and this girl came in wearing an Illinois Wesleyan shirt. She was like, "Oh, my God! Do you go to Wesleyan?" and the girl is like, "Ah! I just applied there and they gave me a shirt." She was like, she told us how she was like in tears 'cause she was like, "You have to go to this school," and I feel like I don't even – it's hard to characterize why I love Illinois Wesleyan and why I feel like all of us do, but it's just I feel like, there are a few people I know, and I think actually nobody who stayed to Wesleyan till the end—I feel like some people who didn't like it and they transferred, but the people who stayed throughout their years here would tell you to come in a heartbeat. Like there's no question about it that we love Illinois Wesleyan.

(giggling)

Dehlin: It's so true.

Win: And I think part of it too is the professors, I mean, they – they – I feel like when I tell some of my friends who didn't go to Wesleyan about my college experience, I'm like, "Oh yeah I was actually friends with my professors and they would ask you how your day is going and they knew when you were kind of at the breaking point and could tell you." And since like for me this was always one or two days a semester where I just could not continue because of all the stress and that typically manifested in my voice lessons because of voice - when you're singing, it's a very intimate thing with yourself and with your emotions and my voice professors would be like, "okay you need to take a break. Why don't you sit down?" And then I'd just start crying. But I feel like they would know how to – sense how you were feeling academically, emotionally and like, especially, stress level and they could help you navigate that.

Dehlin: Yeah, that's so true. I feel like a lot of my path was shaped by my professors. I really did not enjoy my first major choice and I feel like luckily, a couple of my first really great gen ed professors saw that in me and saw that I liked my creative writing course and my philosophy course and they spoke with me about it, about potentially majoring in that and saw that I was not really happy in my current major and like, talked to me about the path to that and kind of helped shape my way to shifting over and that really had a big impact on me.

Win: What - sorry

Dehlin: -oh, yeah -

Win: What was your first major?

Dehlin: Math ... (both laugh) ... which is a great major but it wasn't for me. (laughing) It was not for me, and then I loved my new majors and my professors and you're right, I was like so close with them. And even throughout the Wesleyan experience, like throughout those four years, they continued to help, like encouraged me to do honors research and like different projects and, you know, get me a tutoring job – just stuff like that, like the personal connection is so strong and it's just fantastic and so unique.

Win: Mm-hmm... I should say– I think it's important to this interview to say how we became friends...

Dehlin: Oh, yeah

Win: ...which is that we were randomly paired as roommates.

Dehlin: Yes!

Win: And it worked out great, 'cause we're still friends. I don't know why you chose to do random selection but I was like, well, I don't want the pressure of it not working out being on me, so if I get randomly paired with somebody and it sucks, at least that was on the Wesleyan matching system. I didn't have to be personally accountable.

Dehlin: Yeah, I – I guess I did it because I only knew one other girl in our class, from my high school who was coming here and I didn't feel like trying to seek out someone myself was really going to be the best way. So random roommate seemed like a good option 'cause of the – the quiz and everything. And we got very lucky or...

Win: Yeah...

Dehlin: ... Wesleyan did very well 'cause I know not everyone who goes to college has our story...umm... but yeah.

Win: You know we did get super lucky – I don't know – I don't even – I guess, it would be funny to say that initially we had very different perceptions of one another, like I was picturing – like from – so the way Wesleyan matches you up is you list – you take this quiz about your preferences and then it's like, 'What are your sleeping habits?', 'Are you a morning person?', 'Are you a night person?', 'What are your – like the things you like to do socially' – I don't even – what else is on there? Like how clean you are...?

Dehlin: Probably... stuff like that, yeah.

Win: And then they take that process and then match you to someone who they think is compatible with your preferences and then you get like an email description – or you get a description via email that your roommate wrote, and I remember being so nervous, like oh my god, that doesn't come out until like a couple weeks before I move into school. Who am I gonna get? And then I got super long description from Kristina, which was lovely. I don't know even – I don't remember what you put there but it was like a very detailed description of who you are, what you like to do, what you're excited about for college and then I gave you a two sentence description.

Dehlin: Yeah, I remember writing mine. I was so nervous (laughing) and I really wanted to give a good – like, description of who I was as a person, to start our friendship, and I got from Megan just a couple sentences...

Win: You were practical.

Dehlin: ...which made me very nervous thinking that she was not interested in being friends and here we are today (laughing).

Win: So come move in day, I was already here a little early for MALANA, which was a multicultural, students of diversity pre-orientation. I don't remember what it stands for now but, and I don't think, I don't know if it's called MALANA anymore, it could be called something different but anyway it was nice because they... I think still, but also when we started college, Wesleyan is predominantly Caucasian students so they really made a push to help the students of color be engaged and have that closer community rather than just being thrown in with everybody else, and so I thought that was nice because I had like a couple days before the whole class of 2016 came in. And to – I had that time to get acclimated to the culture of Wesleyan, and like just the physical space and then, most importantly feel like I had a network of students that I fit in with. And so I was already like, felt comfortable on campus and so then I – Christina texted me and was like, "oh, I'm here." And I was like, "Oh, my roommate's here" and I brought her two my friends who I am still friends with today – Sam Lily and Lorena Delgado and we went and greeted her at the Shirk center and I – for you it was very overwhelming.

Dehlin: Yes. Because on move in day, at least at that time, you have all your stuff, and your family, whoever's helping you move and you go, and you have to take your id picture immediately -

Win: Yes!!!

Dehlin: - when you're trying to move all your stuff and there's a lot of people and it's very overwhelming. And I think you have orientation activities pretty quickly too, if I recall, so there's a lot going on.

Win: Yeah. That was a long answer to "What qualities drew you to Illinois Wesleyan and why did you come here?" (laughs)

Dehlin: it really turned into love fest – Illinois Wesleyan. (Win laughs)

Win: ...which I feel like is still relevant to the question because I feel like you really get that sense of love – that everybody loves Wesleyan and – and – I don't know – there's just something different about people that go to Wesleyan. I feel like, kind of what you were saying like, the people – you really can just go up to anybody and start talking to them regardless of their major, their interests – I mean, people are just receptive to wanting to talk to you and get to know you and I – that's not the case for a lot of places...

Dehlin: yeah

Win: ...especially like now in the real world, I'm like, 'Wow, how come not everybody wants to talk to me and know my story.' (giggles)...Any ways I love Wesleyan. We all love Wesleyan.

Dehlin: Oh, I thought this said, "Do you have a favorite spot on campus"?

Win: Oh, that's a good question.

Dehlin: We could invent that question.

Win: Yeah...

Dehlin: I mean I have answer yet. (laughing) I have so many favorite spots. I love Ames.

Win: Oh, yeah!

Dehlin: -gorgeous building. We spent a lot of time in Ames. It's so beautiful.

Win: Mm-hmm...Also, I felt like for me, a lot of my time in Ames was about pretending – not pretending to do work but trying to do work and then just hanging out with people.

Dehlin: Yeah, it was a healthy mixture.

Win: Yeah

Dehlin: Yeah, like some... some finals weeks we would get there super early-

Win: because...

Dehlin: -to get a study room.

Win: Those study rooms were gold! Like you – it was a fight to get them.

Dehlin: Mm-hmm... and then we would spend like all day there.

Win: One of our friends, Rosy, who I just saw last week – she would wake up at like 7:30, go to Ames when it opened, camp out in the study room and then we would take shifts so we didn't lose it, 'cause I think there was a policy or something ...like... you can't have... there were some rules that we were like, okay, we need to make sure we can keep this room.

Dehlin: I loved it. I loved the comradery of everyone.

Win: Yeah!!!

Dehlin: ...at Ames during finals time.

Win: But also, if you had to get things done, you could go there and not go to a study room because I feel like going to a study room was like... 75% would be like “Oh! School sucks”, “Oh, what are you doing?”, “Oh, I don’t wanna do my homework...” – let’s talk about whatever and whatever, and like trying to work but not actually getting work done and then 25% ‘Okay, I really gotta get this done.’

Dehlin: Yeah. If you really had an important deadline, you had to get a solo table.

Win: Yeah, or those little cubicle things.

Dehlin: Mm-hmm...

Win: So yeah, Ames is a good one. I love all the trees on Wesleyan.

Dehlin: Yeah...

Win: One time, Kristina and I went around... didn’t we go hug a lot of the trees?

Dehlin: Yeah.

Win: I don’t even remember when we did that.

Dehlin: I don’t know... early on.

Win: Yeah. I do like all the trees and I feel like, this time of the year when all the leaves are changing, is a very strong memory in my mind of – that I associate with Illinois Wesleyan. Like the fall, all the leaves changing, especially like when you drive behind Ames...

Dehlin: Mm-hmm...

Win: ...there is all those beautiful trees there – that’s one of my favorite places. State Farm hall became a very nice place to study except that wasn’t open initially when we started...

Dehlin: Yeah...

Win: I don’t know if I would say it’s one of my favorite spots but it’s just a beautiful spot.

Dehlin: Yeah, I guess that was a change we’ve seen in our time...

Win: Mm-hmm...

Dehlin: ...at Wesleyan. Yeah.

Win: I would say another one of my favorite spots is the house we lived in senior year...

Dehlin: Oh, yeah!

Win: ...which we called the chapel because it was near Evelyn Chapel.

Dehlin: Yeah...

Win: I still do love Evelyn Chapel. It’s a beautiful space, especially as a singer, that was like, a very lovely space to sing in so I had both my recitals there, so that was lovely. But especially our house, I still get very nostalgic when I think about our house and we, in fact, drove by it yesterday.

Dehlin: And every time we come back, we drive by it.

Win: It was a beautiful space, and a – it actually wasn't that pretty, it was a pretty old.

Dehlin: To us, it was nice.

Win: Yeah!

Dehlin: It was our first like adult, rent-paying place.

Win: Yeah!

Dehlin: And we lived with 5 – no 6 people, a bunch of our best friends, which also is probably a testament to how... how easy it is to make friends with people of different interests in groups because we had a couple other girls from Kappa Delta and then some – like one girl from our freshman dorm who is also my best friend, and then Rosy we mentioned – did you meet her at MALANA?

Win: Ah-hun.

Dehlin: Yeah, so a lot of different groups and majors all together, which was cool.

Win: Yeah.

Dehlin: And we all still keep in touch.

Win: Yeah!! And I just like, I just miss the times when you could – you're still close to all of your really, really good friends, and the people who were formative in – in shaping you into adulthood, and you just got to be by them every day – like, that is such a gift.

Dehlin: Yeah, to see them every single day...

Win: Mm-hmm...Love Wesleyan

Dehlin: Yeah...

Win: That is – that is the theme of this story... umm... let's see. What are you leaning towards?

Dehlin: Oh, I was looking at favorite stories or memories, but there are so many – I don't know if I have any in mind.

(pause)

Win: Well, I – since I was a member of collegiate choir, we got to go on choir tour every spring break and that was such a nice part of my college experience, because we would go – and we worked really hard on – on this very challenging repertoire and then we'd get to go all around the country and we get to do homestays, which is my first going into some – like a stranger's house and having them host us. So I loved doing the homestays. I loved getting to be – to hang out for such an extended amount of time travelling in the country with a lot of my good friends, and I also loved making beautiful music with them. And inevitably, people would be like, 'Oh, that was a wonderful concert but I think that...'. So on choir, you do like – on the choir, you do like – I don't know – like, 10 concerts – anywhere from 7 to 10 concerts within a week, which is taxing physically, but also emotionally. I – I'm pretty sure that I cried every single concert that I did because I was like, this is just so beautiful! It was out of grat- they were happy tears, maybe also like, because I was tired, but that was – it was- it was just like undescrivable –

getting to make incredible music with people that you're close to and getting to see in the audience, people appreciating that.

Dehlin: That was a huge highlight.

Win: Oh my God, we didn't even talk about the happy club.

Dehlin: Oh, yeah.

Win: I mean, tell your story first.

Dehlin: Oh, I was gonna mention Kappa Delta, because that was a big part of – I guess both of our college experiences, and I had a lot of good memories. We both joined freshman year and I think maybe neither of us thought we would join a sorority.

Win: Yeah, I was like, 'Oh, a sorority? Not me.'

Dehlin: Yeah, but I think at Wesleyan it's maybe a little bit different than at other schools...

Win: I agree.

Dehlin: ...because it's quite small, there's only a few sororities so it's not as taxing as an experience I think to go through...

Win: Mm-hmm... wasn't that scary

Dehlin: ...recruitment

Win: ...but it was still...

Dehlin: ...it was still intimidating but not – you're not going to like 20 houses.

Win: Yeah.

Dehlin: umm... so and...it felt a lot more welcoming, and Kappa Delta especially felt welcoming to me, which is why I joined. And Megan being there made me feel a lot less nervous about that.

Win: Same! I remember on pref night, was it? We were both like, well, I know we are not supposed to say but where did you (unintelligible) me? And they were like, okay, hopefully, we will be in the same place. And I – I don't think it would have changed anything about our friendship necessarily, like I think we still would have been good friends...

Dehlin: Mm-hmm...

Win: ...but definitely getting to go through that experience together I think made us closer friends.

Dehlin: Yeah, for sure. Definitely, yeah. And we both had leadership positions through KD. There was a lot of great philanthropy work which is actually another reason I wanted to join 'cause we work with the girl scouts which is really, really cool. We made a lot of other great friends who we ended up living with, and it was just a really all-round great experience and we got to go to a National Conference with like, hundreds...

Win: I don't even know ...

Dehlin: I don't know... a bunch of other Kappa Delta's

Win: ...a lot of Kappa Deltas

Dehlin: ...from all over the country and even National Council, and it was just like really inspiring – it's a sorority all about female empowerment, confidence and leadership, so I...

Win: -which-

Dehlin: Yeah...

Win: -go ahead-

Dehlin: I was just going to say I'm really glad I joined.

Win: Yeah! And I feel like that's so crucial at this time right now, like this political climate where personally it feels like... like society is knocking down on women all the time...

Dehlin: Mm-hmm...

Win: I feel like, I am so grateful to have been in Kappa Delta, in an organization that ... there ... one of their mottos is building confidence in women and inspiring women to ...

Dehlin: Inspiring action

Win: ...yeah, building confidence, inspiring action, right? That's like one of their (overlapping)

Dehlin: Yeah (overlapping)

Win: I don't know what they are called, but I think that really manifested because we had people from nationals come in and help us with personal development on – in terms of leadership and you know, being confident in your skin and presenting yourself as being okay with who you are and not feeling like you had to change who you were for anybody or any purpose...and so I feel like I was a pretty confident person before coming to Illinois Wesleyan but at the end of it, having gone through this experience and being in KD, I was like, Wow! I have changed so much for the better and gotten so much more confident in who I am and what I can offer to the world.

Dehlin: Yeah. KD built me up so much. I was not that confident coming in to Wesleyan and I feel like through... through those leadership exercises and like just talking in front of a group of 80 girls every week really built me up. And just being surrounded by other girls who are leaders on campus like so many KDs were in charge of other RSOs – it was fantastic! And just involved in so many great organizations and different majors – it was really inspiring. And I – I recently...

Win: Yeah...

Dehlin: ...applied and got a position to advise another Kappa Delta chapter on a Loyola campus in Chicago and being around those other alums and Loyola students, Loyola KDs was really cool because it reminded me how great it was to be around those, like, confident, inspiring women and what a great experience that was and I was so glad to have that network throughout college.

Win: Mm-hmm... mm-hmm... and I think another cool thing about being in a sorority is that it – it bridges connections for you across majors and also across the years.

Dehlin: mm-hmm...

Win: so horizontally and vertically. And I feel like I definitely would not have known so many upperclassmen who I looked up to so much, 'cause I was like 'Wow! Look at these amazing women doing amazing things.' I mean...

Dehlin: It's so true.

Win: ...they were all so cool and so inspiring and so accomplished and I was like, wow I get to be like that soon.

Dehlin: Mm-hmm...

Win: Yeah... it was fantastic! Oh, the happy club!

Dehlin: The Happy Club! Why did you wanna start the happy club?

Win: So I... I ... we had some people come to my high school, I think from Northwestern and they had just mentioned something about the happy club, and I was like, 'Wow! that sounds so cool'. A club that is dedicated to making other people smile and making other people happy, so like orientation week, when I got to Wesleyan, I was like, "Do you have a happy club?" and they were like, "No. But you could start one." And I was like, "Oh, okay!" So Kristina and I and our friend Maggie who was actually our neighbor in Munsell, so we have all been friends since day one. We had talked about ... I mentioned to you guys, "You know, I'm pretty interested in started this club because I feel like everybody could use another reason to smile," especially when students on college campuses I feel like are under high stress when you're going to college and I think that for as much as Wesleyan is a culture of community, everybody is super high-achieving, so everybody is like stressed a lot because you're trying to do so much. And so I feel like on college campuses, in general, and especially Illinois Wesleyan, I was looking for a reason to just make people smile, help them get through their days on the days that weren't so great, and so I mentioned to you and to Maggie. I was like, "Hey, I'm pretty interested in starting a happy club. Here's kind of what I think we would do with it. Are you interested in starting it?" And... well, why did you choose to start it with me?

Dehlin: Oh, that's a good question. I guess it – the simple answer is it sounded like a good idea. , and I think, honestly, I've told you this before, but you really helped show me how important prioritizing happiness is...

Win: Oh! Thank you!

Dehlin: ...which is something I hadn't like practically thought of before because I think I am definitely in that Wesleyan group, like, we all are focusing on over-achieving like, being busy, doing everything that I possibly can. But focusing on happiness was not like one of those things on the list so I thought that was really cool and I want to be a part of that...

Win: So we did it! So that was freshman year, where we sort of the inception of the happy club and then sophomore year we started it so we applied to be an RSO, we got ...

Dehlin: A budget?

Win: ... a faculty...

Dehlin: ...oh, an advisor...

Win: ...we did not get a budget!

Dehlin: Oh!

Win: We did everything from our own money until our senior year...

Dehlin: Oh...

Win: ...when we paired up with the residence halls to do a big event because that's where the budget was.

Dehlin: Hmm... that's right.

Win: I don't know why we kept trying to apply for funding but at that time, and maybe still now, you couldn't do it for like food unless it was...

Dehlin: Right!

Win: We wanted to give out candy and they were like, "well, we can't give you money for candy." And so we were like okay, we'll just go buy a bag of candy. And what we wanted to do, we had a lot of dreams with food,

Dehlin: Yeah.. and a lot of big dreams. We learned that you can't do those floating paper lantern things.

Win: Yeah I still have

Dehlin: It's not legal.

Win: I still have 50 paper lanterns in my parents' place, that are eco-friendly because we thought about that but then we were – we – so I bought it thinking I was gonna be reimbursed because here was the plan. Well, the plan was to do an event at IWU – I think we had a nice name but I can't remember now, in which everybody writes their dreams on these paper lanterns and then in the evening, you release it. Like you get to write a dream of yours and then you put it out into the universe. It was gonna be amazing.

Dehlin: We were too ambitious.

Win: And then we tried to submit it for reimbursement and they were like, "That's illegal in McLean County." And we were like, "Oh! Okay..." so scratch that idea. But we did things like, free hugs, high fives, and happy thoughts in which all of our members – I mean like , 10 of our friends and like a couple of people who were not our friends but wanted to partake.

Dehlin: They were regular members. We had regular weekly meetings.

Win: Right. We did. And I would say we had like around 15 to 20 people come, which was so exciting. At the RSO fair, we had over a hundred people sign up to be on our mailing list and I just feel like, as a co-founder of that organization, getting to see so many people interested, even though not all of them could commit to the weekly meetings, just so many people interested in being a part of that and I was like... I was like giddy with joy. I was like, 'Oh, my goodness! Look at all the' – every new person that signed up, I remember you and I were like, "Look at who it is!" So anyway, we did events like free hugs, high fives and happy thoughts in which we – our members would write happy quotes – or inspiring quotes, funny things like, I remember Becky wrote one and that was like, "Chin up, buttercup. TG – or titan green is a good color on everybody," and something about like, "Homework sucks but at least it's not the hunger games," something like that. So we would pass out those things in the dugout and then we'd ask people if they wanted high fives or a happy thought or even a hug and actually a lot of people wanted high fives and I'm like, 'People don't want hugs,' which is okay. Some people were like, "No, I don't want anything." We were like, "Okay, you could probably use one." But... we did that... umm...

Dehlin: ...We also did – because you were really interested in positive psychology, so we did-

Win: -oh, yeah.

Dehlin: -we tried to touch on that. We did like some Myers Briggs type testing, the love languages, we watch the happy documentary, stuff like that-

Win: -wow, we did a lot- high five

Dehlin: - Yeah, we really tried to dig in...

(both high five)

Dehlin: ...to happiness

Win: I would say that it was like – the things we did were twofold. It was like, a lot of the events we did, the campus wide events were just to make someone smile. We chalked the quad with – we – had – we called it graffiti for good, but it wasn't graffiti, it was just – we just chalked the quad with inspiring things around finals week – things to perk people up, give 'em a lift, especially during finals week. But then in our meetings it was a lot about, I feel like stress management and ...like we did visit – umm... activity where you write your insecurities or your fears on a piece of paper and then you tear it up and throw it in the garbage to show that you're better than that and those insecurities don't define you. I remember that was really powerful. I was like, 'Wow! This is so cool. We're just like tearing up paper and throwing it away,' and like the symbolism behind that. So I feel like our solid contingency of people that came – came for the emotional support I feel like, and also just like, an hour out of your week to not stress about everything you had to do.

Dehlin: And that reminds me a lot of people who we talked to about the happy club said something along the lines of, "Well, I'm not happy. I can't be a member of the happy club," and I even sometimes felt like that, like 'how can I lead this club, I'm not happy right now.' But we would tell them like, "Well, this club is like to support you. Like, we're trying to encourage happiness. You don't have to be happy all the time,' especially like you were saying on a college campus, especially ones like Wesleyan where everyone is trying to, like, just go-go-go all the time, like, it gets extremely stressful. So we were just trying to lighten the load a little bit-

Win: -yeah-

Dehlin: -and we could...

Win: -spread some joy-

Dehlin: -yeah-

Win: -promote – I think our mission was to promote positivity amongst Illinois Wesleyan students and its community.

Dehlin: mm-hmm...

Win: And I feel like we did that. We did this really big event called quest for kindness in which we did like a scavenger hunt around campus, and it was like – the scavenger hunt wasn't like, find a box of tissues. It was like, go tell five people a compliment to make their day, and it was – it was just to do things to make the joy widespread. And we partnered with the residence halls so we a huge budget for that. We had like cups made, buttons made, and then the winning teams got Amazon gift cards which I feel like were worth \$50. Like they were a lot, and so I – that was really the pinnacle I feel like of the happy club. And unfortunately, I don't think it still exists. I'm not sure. It is still an RSO but I don't think there are any people continuing it, which is fine.

Dehlin: But – but I will say it is really cool that we were able to do that-

Win: yeah...

Dehlin: -which is so – just another telling thing of Wesleyan and how you really have power here to – to pursue what you're interested in, like if you wanna start a club, you can.

Win: Yeah. I know. I remember they were like, "The happy club is not there but you could just start it." And I was like, "Oh, cool!" So... I loved the happy club...a lot. And I feel like other people did too. They would – people would definitely say like, "Oh, I love you guys." I remember we did like one event where we – all 20 of us or whoever – we stood outside, like, one of the buildings and we had like high-five train for people coming out of class, called high-five Friday or something like that. I think another huge part of our Wesleyan experience was studying abroad.

Dehlin: Yeah.

Win: So we both got to study abroad in Copenhagen, Denmark. And for me – that – I studied positive psychology which was amazing and I also got to study voice at the Royal Danish Academy of Music, which like I would never get that experience another way. Those students were wicked talented and I was like, "Wow, I get to be part of this."

Dehlin: And I studied English literature, I think that was the program and – also in Copenhagen,

Win: Um, which I guess in this interview is now 35 minutes of why we love Illinois Wesleyan so kudos to whoever is transcribing. Is that you, Katherine? Yeah! Props to you! But we love Denmark. I – I had never had the experience of living somewhere on my own and I – I traveled a lot before studying abroad but when I – it's just so crucial to expanding your world and expanding your viewpoint, and getting to live in a culture that's not America. It really taught me how to slow down and focus on the things that matter, and like prioritize relationships and – with people, and I think the Danes have a beautiful sentiment about that – and they – as a culture, prioritize connecting with one another, and it's beautiful country, people are so nice. And the family that I got to stay with were just incredible. It's really adorable. 70 and 75 year old couple who lived in the house that they built and my host mom was a potter so she got her ceramics studio on the basement and it was a joyous, joyous time.

Dehlin: Yeah, it was just – for me, it was fantastic learning experience and getting to be independent like I did a lot of exploring on my own as well. Also really creative experience because my classes involved a lot of writing. We were doing poetry collaborations in Russia with other Russian students, like throughout the week, it was just fantastic. We're like, taking a weekend to a small Danish island for another like writing workshop and just kind of viewing literature and writing through the lens of culture... ummm... was really impactful for me and actually inspired my honors research project when we returned, so that is just another example of how like each experience here really kind of shapes the next, I think.

Win: which is nice, 'cause then there's a nice continuity and you can – I think that as a student I feel – as a former student of Wesleyan I feel so proud of how much I have grown since I came and then who I was as I left, and even how being part of Wesleyan has shaped who I am becoming still. I feel like the most crucial things I learned from Illinois Wesleyan was about becoming a leader, connecting with other people, it was less so about the academics, even though the academics are really strong part of Wesleyan but more so about growing up as a person and I am so indebted to Wesleyan for what it has given me.

Dehlin: Yeah, I completely agree. I don't know what I would have turned out like if I went somewhere else, and I didn't meet these other friends and professors who really shaped who I am, and yeah even through the academics I learned, I think. Here they teach you to be a good critical thinker, a good...

member of society, and I just think it's a totally invaluable experience and I'm – I'm also really proud of what I did here and what I accomplished. I'm so, so grateful for everything that I gained from Wesleyan.

Win: We love Illinois Wesleyan, in short.

Dehlin: Yes!

Win: You could scrap everything else but just make sure that you know that we love Wesleyan-

Dehlin: -we love Wesleyan -

Win: - that's why we keep coming back for homecoming.

Dehlin: Yes!

Win: I guess...

Dehlin: I guess we should call it. I guess that's all we have to say.

Win: I could say a lot more about why I love Wesleyan.

Dehlin: We could talk about why we'll love it forever, but we'll spare you.

Win: Yeah, thank you.

Dehlin: Thank you for listening.