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Tips to Balance Work, School, and Kids

By **Lafayette Mom Guest Author** - May 3, 2021

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Tips to Balance Work, School, and Kids

In 2019, I was working full time in a new position and navigating life with a 2-year-old when I decided once again to enroll as a student at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

As I began to register for courses, I turned to my fellow moms, “I can do this… right?” Their answer was a resounding, “YES, absolutely… and it will be tough.”



It has been. Earning a degree is hard. Period. It’s also incredibly gratifying, and after a few semesters, I’ve picked up a lot of great advice from moms who’ve seen it through.

On the hard days, their words keep me moving.

Make courses your priority.

You can’t do it all.

It took me too long to realize I had to let some things go during the semester. Some of them are small – folding clothes? Not happening. But there are also bigger, harder things, like missing out on some family or “me” time to make sure assignments are complete.

But Destiny Theriot, who earned her bachelor’s online in Health Services Administration, reminded me that’s ok.

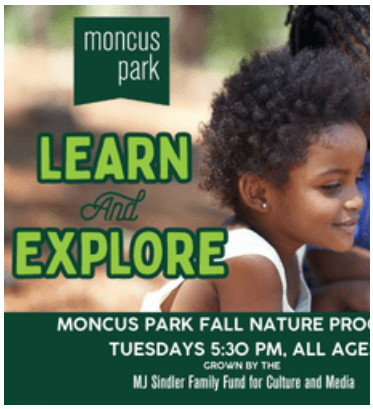
“For those weeks during the semester, I may miss a couple of birthday parties and I may miss a Thanksgiving dinner, or a family vacation because this is the priority,” she says. “It’s crucial to stay focused on your goals and have supportive people in your life who can keep motivating you when you feel like giving up.”

Lean on your village.

Kennette Toussaint, who earned her bachelor’s in general studies online, had a great village behind her and inspired me to activate mine.

“My job is 45 minutes away, so my sisters made sure my son got to school on time every morning, my mom made sure he was picked up in the afternoon, my brothers babysat when I needed if he didn’t have school, but I had to work,” she says. “My siblings, my parents, they played a major part.”

Admittedly, I don’t like asking for help. But leaning on my mother-in-law has helped our family maintain some semblance





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of sanity while I'm in school.

I've also made a point to communicate to my husband before and throughout the semester about the time I'll need to potentially "go to school" by closing myself in a room for a while.

Embrace the third shift.

I hadn't heard anyone describe it quite that way until speaking with Dr. Dione Davis, who is the advisor for UL Lafayette's online bachelor's in business. She gets her students because she had a similar path.

"Essentially, I created a third shift," she said. "I'd go to work and then I was a mother in the afternoons and at night. Then after everyone was in bed, I got to work on my degree."

While Dr. Davis helped put a name on it, that's the schedule I hear a lot of moms adopt while earning their degrees.

But it doesn't work for me.

Most of the time, my tank is empty at the end of the day, so I block off several hours over the weekend to power through my coursework.

Find the right program.

Online courses can make all the difference in simplifying the logistics of earning your degree, whether you want to complete your bachelor's or take the next step in your career through a master's degree.

UL Lafayette has several online degree programs with a support team dedicated solely to online students.

Returning to school is a big step, but by finding the right program and the right schedule for you, you can absolutely do it.

Request information today to learn how you can earn a respected, accredited degree 100% online through the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

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Hope Aucoin lives in Lafayette with her husband, spirited 3-year-old daughter, and two very fluffy dogs. She works full time at UL Lafayette while pursuing her graduate degree and intermittently finding time to stitch and plant all the zinnias.

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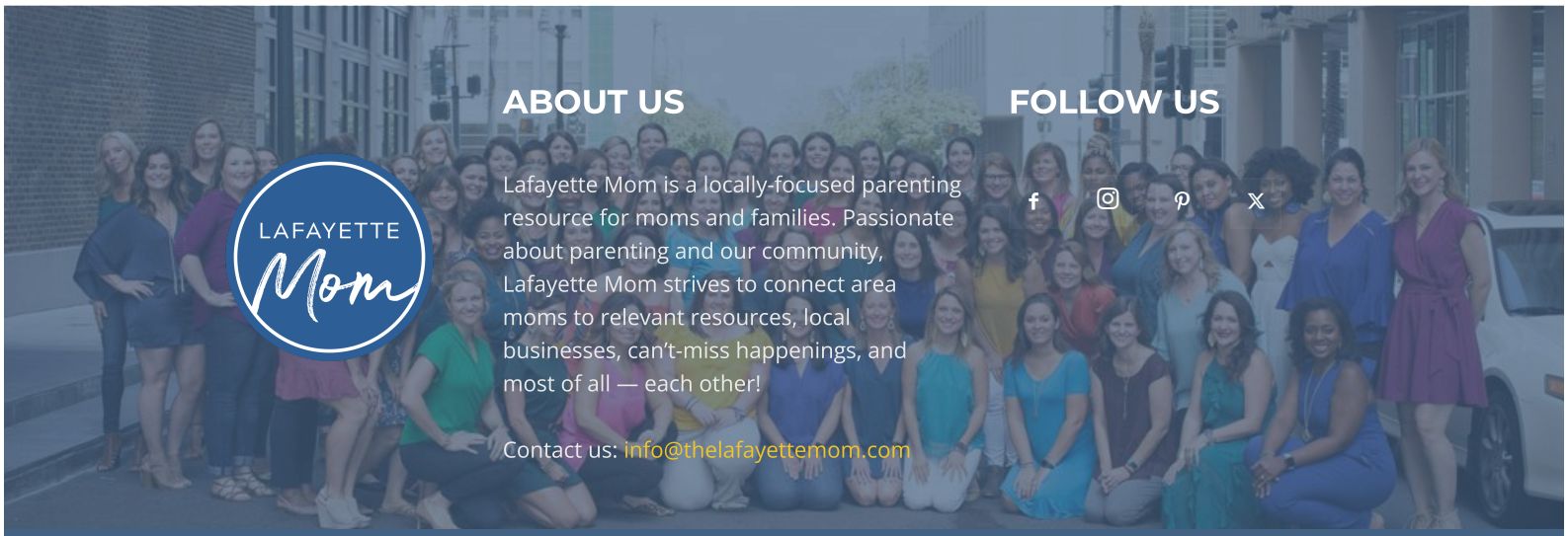
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