Internships and Co-Ops in the School of Liberal Arts and Sciences

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In pursuit of History

The David Library holds one-of-a-kind collections that cannot be found anywhere else in the country. During the spring of 2013, Kyle Stenger, currently a senior History major, interned at the David Library of the American Revolution (primarily a microform archive and contains important documentation of American history dating back from 1750) in Washington Crossing, PA. During his internship, Stenger painstakingly went through hundreds of microform reels, with each reel containing images of books that are nearly 400 pages. Each reel documented the lives of past century Americans (such as court trials) and Stenger made spreadsheets for future researchers of what of the information contained in each reel.

While the work was strenuous, Stenger enjoyed the historical subject material and discovered unusual stories: “One was a murder-mystery,” Stenger said. “The husband was killed by a soldier but it turned out that that soldier was sleeping with that man’s wife and she persuaded him to kill the husband but then the servant witnessed it and it all went to hell. That was a fun one.” However, Stenger also researched extensively, mainly going through archives and records to help people trace their family lineage to confirm that their ancestors lived in certain places. Occasionally, he also helped people (normally professors or other academics) unable to make it to the library with research for their papers or books.

Stenger says he plans to become a history professor and writer in the future, though he loved his work at the David Library and could see himself working there. More importantly, he feels that he has acquired valuable research skills which he can apply to a career in the future because, “General historical research helps you open your mind to the past and see the way people thought and acted.” Even though his internship ended last May, Stenger remains involved with the David Library. He is currently writing a grant proposal to help the library improve and repair old texts and finally move their library to an easily accessible online format.

Gaining experience and making a difference

Junior Eva Truncellito has combined her passion for helping others and studies of criminal justice into a unique internship experience. Truncellito is a Criminal Justice major with a minor in Social Work. She is currently interning at Womanspace, nonprofit agency that provides services to people in Mercer County impacted by domestic and sexual violence.

Womanspace helps women get out of abusive households and trains its members to properly deal
with people affected by domestic violence. Rider has had a longterm relationship with Womanspace. Director of the Law and Justice program Dr. Ava Baron knew the director of the organization when it first opened in 1977. Truncellito approached Dr. Baron about interning for them, and she is the first Rider student intern to receive advocacy training.

The internship is rigorous and puts Truncellito through 80 hours of training to become a volunteer Sexual Assault Support Services (SASS) advocate (SASSA) and member of the Domestic Violence Victim Response Team (DVVRT).

“SASS advocates accompany sexual assault victims at hospitals and police departments and DVVRT volunteers meet with victims of domestic violence at police stations to provide crisis intervention, emotional support, and information.” said Truncellito.

Truncellito is trained by Heidi Mueller and Alison Daks, two accomplished members of Womanspace. Other speakers are also brought in to aid her training, such as professionals from police departments, prosecutor offices, the courts, and social service agencies. Truncellito feels her time spent with professionals in the field has taught her tremendously, and is one of the most important parts of her learning experience.

“One of the most valuable aspects of the training is getting exposure to information and viewpoints from many professionals who teach from real life experiences. These are people with years of experience working in this field every day, and so just getting to spend time learning from them is so invaluable.”

Eva's internship is especially suited to her because it combines not only the legal aspect of resolving domestic disputes, and also allows her to be an advocate for women and incorporate her interest in social work.

She is learning about law and legal proceedings, but also sees the reality of each case: the people who have been affected by domestic violence and need help. “What has impressed me the most about the training is the need to develop and balance a combination of practical knowledge about the field, people skills, and medical and legal information. I am learning that to be effective in these crisis situations takes much more than just a willingness to help and that I have to be both objective and empathetic, to engage people from their point of view, and to keep tuned into the fact that we are working within a system in which all parts, social, personal, and legal, need to mesh together. It’s quite a challenge.”

Dr. Baron is very pleased with Truncellito's work so far, and felt confident in her from the start. “Eva's a terrific student, she is dedicated, hard working; you couldn’t ask for somebody who is more self directed. She is able to work independently and also able to take directions and follow instructions. I felt perfectly fine about sending her into the field, she takes her job seriously.”

Truncellito's internship has certainly given her a taste of many different career options, such as police officer, judge, lawyer, social worker, or director of a non-profit organization. She is unsure of what field she will pursue and is considering entering the Peace Corps or law school, but feels that her experience with Womanspace is a great start.

Aiding children leads to degree revelation

Jeremy Garcia, a senior Advertising and Marketing double major, wasn't sure exactly what he wanted to do with his degree. However, after finding out about an internship with The Children's Home Society of New Jersey (CHS of NJ) in Trenton at the Rider career fair last spring, his outlook changed. The CHS of NJ is a non-profit organization that provides services (such as community services and foster care programs) that ensure that New Jersey children have safety, secure, caring families and good health. Though Jeremy did not work in directly with the children, his internship work consisted of helping plan their Spring Gala, an important fundraising event for CHS of NJ.

The main highlight of the Spring Gala was the silent auction, which consisted of about sixty different items that varied from an Ipad to a cake pop maker. Jeremy was an essential help behind the scenes, com
ing up with ideas for the auction items, filling enve-
lopes, writing out descriptions of the items and setting
up the day of the event. His work not only helped the
needy children of New Jersey but also Jeremy himself
as he states “It helped me pick the field in advertising/
marketing that I wanted to go in. When making the
descriptions for the items in the silent auction I no-
ticed it came naturally. That’s when I realized I wanted
to be a copywriter.”

Yet more than that, Jeremy also is grateful for
the opportunity to help other families with the mon-
ey raised at the Spring Gala. His work at CHS of NJ
turned out to be crucial for his course work and future
career as he states, “This internship helped me really
get into the brain of the consumers, see how they think
and how they would react in certain situations.” He
will be doing a second internship with the CHS of NJ
this spring, again working to set-up the Spring Gala.

“Help! My wife wants to open a bar
in Cambodia!”

No, that is not an S.O.S message, that is a sub-
ject header Professor Jeff Edelstein (adjunct instruc-
tor in the Communications department), used when
pitching an idea to a potential employer. While it may
have been unorthodox, he received a response almost
right away and ended up doing work for the employer.
Edelstein does not suggest everyone send in bizarre
subject headers, but stresses that potential employees
make an effort to stand out to employers.

In 2004 his boss at The Trentonian put him in
charge of hiring a new employee. He posted the posi-
tion on journalism.com and received 125 candidates in
less than 24 hours. It came down to which candidates
catched his attention. He brought the applicants that
stood out the most in their cover letters and résumés to
his boss for consideration. Here are his tips for being a
candidate to stand out amongst the rest.

**Make a personal connection.**

It’s easy to be lost in a sea of applicants, espe-
cially when you are only represented on paper by your
résumé. Do something that will establish a connection.
Try to use something interesting or unexpected in your
cover letter/emails. Today students compete for jobs or
internships against people who have similar résumés
(high GPA, past experience, letters of recommen-
dation, etc.) and the more you stand out in a pile of
applications, the more likely you are to get called in for
an interview.

Get out there and market yourself in person.
Always offer to be available to meet up for lunch or
talk to establish that connection. Even if you don’t get
that particular job, you may make a connection that
could cause the employer to consider you for future
opportunities.

**Use the personal connections you have.**

Edelstein would visit his old professors at Rider,
which helped him eventually get an adjunct teaching
job at the university. Jeff Barnhart was a Rider graduate
who now owns a marketing firm, so Edelstein reached
out to him as a Rider alum and now they have done
worked on some projects together.

**Let Social Media help advance you, not hinder you.**

Expect an employer to Google you, so keep
in mind what you would want a potential employer
to see. Being active on social media can show your
personality and interest in your field, so don’t be afraid
to be active on Twitter and Facebook about your career
goals.

If you are uncomfortable with employers seeing
your profile, keep it private and make it more difficult
to find by adding your middle initial to your name.
You can also create a professional profile. Edelstein is
a columnist for The Trentonian, so he uses Twitter and
Facebook to advertise his articles and communicate
with his readers.

**Take advantage of your location**

Rider students have the opportunity to intern
close by in places such as Trenton or Lawrenceville.
Philadelphia and New York are just a train ride away.
Make the most of Rider’s location and expand your
search. This remains true for when you graduate and
are searching for jobs. Edelstein feels many people are
afraid to leave their comfort zone, but in this job market people from across the country are able to apply for jobs easily over the Internet, and are willing to travel. Widening your search will provide more opportunities.

**Highlighting Your Internship Experience with Lauren Nicolosi**

- Include in separate sections on your résumé labeled “internship experience” or “related experience” that promotes the skills you developed during your internship
- Some skills may be direct and specific:
  - Communication
  - Interpersonal skills
  - Time management
  - Organizational skills
  - Technical skills such as software programs, tools or equipment
- Think broadly: consider ways your internship has indirectly affected you (such as changed your perspectives or skill levels)
- Emphasize your internship experience in your cover letter
- Highlight your internship during interviews as an example of your transferable and technical skills

**Interested in applying for your own internship?**

Here is contact information for the internship coordinators featured in this newsletter:

- **Criminal Justice: Dr. Ava Baron**
  ajbaron@rider.edu (609) 895-5462
- **Communications: Dr. Aaron J. Moore**
  amoore@rider.edu (609) 896-5089
- For other majors, contact **Theresa Marriott, Director**
  marriott@rider.edu (609) 895-5454
- Polish your résumé or discuss internship opportunities with **Lauren Nicolosi, Career Advisor**
  lnicolosi@rider.edu 609-896-5000 ext. 5271

Pictured: Lauren Nicolosi (left) and Theresa Marriott (right)