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## October 2012 Newsletter

Career Center, Illinois Wesleyan University

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# CAREER PROFILE

a look at life outside Illinois Wesleyan University

**Michael Mayo '02**  
Major: Art, focus: Painting

**Depaul '06**  
Master of Arts: Organizational and Multicultural Communications

**Catepillar Inc.:** Communications Consultant

**Hone Street Film Productions**

This month we have a distinguished alumnus, Michael Mayo '02, who graduated with an Art degree. To answer the question in your head of "what makes this so special?" Mayo has done some great things after IWU. He studied at DePaul University to receive a Masters in Organizational and Multicultural Communications. Currently, he's a Communications Consultant at Catepillar in Peoria, IL. Yet, here comes the big one: he and his family have their own film production company called Hone St. Productions. Mayo has definitely had an amazing journey since Illinois Wesleyan. Allow me to introduce, Michael Mayo.

## 1)How prepared were you for your Masters degree?

While my undergrad degree focused on fine arts, the liberal arts background received at IWU provided a solid foundation for advanced academic learning. Creative and critical thinking, writing and general interest in learning in and beyond the classroom were lessons learned at IWU – and critical to success in advanced studies. Had I not participated in history, religion, psychology, language, English, gateway/foundation courses, my undergrad experience would not have been as complete.

**There were certain members of the art faculty who taught me a lot about myself – which I believe strongly, is the critical lesson of college life.** I was taught how to think critically and articulate my work and who I was (or am) as an artist and person.

At IWU's art school, I learned to push and challenge myself, to be bold and confident and perhaps, most importantly, to never give up. Connie Estep was an inspiration and it was faculty members like Connie who, through their encouragement for me to really identify with myself, prepared me for whatever came next – whether grad school, or life, in general.

## 2)Where did the film production company come from with your family?

My dad retired in 2008 and decided to achieve a life-long goal of completing a degree in English which he completed at Bradley University. One of his assignments was to write a 40-page script. I wasn't surprised his "40-page script" ended up being the Hollywood standard 120 pages. I read the story, which centered on characters that have floated in his head for the past 25 years and found myself drawn by the overall message of the story. I provided feedback, and together, we dreamed of how cool it'd be to someday turn the story into a real film.

A few months later I had trouble sleeping and couldn't stop thinking of the script. I approached my dad and brother, an audio engineer, and proposed we turn the script into a real film. I ended up starting Hone St. Productions soon after. I have frequently commented that, with the three of us, my dad, brother and me (a storyteller, an audio guy and a visual artist) we should be able to pull off a decent visual story. Since starting this project, we learned my dad has Stage 3 cancer. He recently completed his first week of chemotherapy at OSF in Peoria and is doing well. This project has brought us together. We've fought, laughed, and there have been some tears as well. Yet, our collaboration came at the right time.

## 3)What pieces of advice do you have for students wishing to pursue a career in film that are at Wesleyan?

There are a lot of different elements of film: production, direction, camera, lights, make-up, set design, sound, location, props, acting etc. What is it you want to do?

I encourage those interested to gather like-minded friends and family and make a short film. There's a lot of mundane organization that is required to make a film and a lot of pitching



ideas, being rejected, phone calls, meetings, insurance, contracts, legal, and budgeting. You can get a taste by producing your own project. You'll have fun, but also get an idea of the amount of work it takes to make a film happen.

Look into internships and be open to stay local. I hired an IWU intern in September and she is doing an out-standing job. A lot of interns who go to typical big film cities may find themselves delivering coffee. There's a lot going on in the Midwest. Do research online for opportunities. Get out in the community and start asking questions. **Work hard – it's not going to come to you. You have to make it happen.**

## 4)What are you currently working on film-wise right now?

Have you ever sat and watched film credits? Isn't it amazing how many people it takes to create a film? Our production team is realizing quickly that delegation and organization are extremely important in the independent film world. I'm working on finalizing filming contracts, budgeting, principal photography schedule, props management, make-up design, appearance and location release forms, storyboarding and rehearsing with the actors. There's other stuff that comes up every week and we manage to get it done. It's tough also having a full-time job, but it is rewarding. **As I mentioned earlier, IWU instilled in me to do my best and never give up.**

# CAREER CONNECTIONS

a newsletter from the hart career center

October 2012

## The Museum Experience... What's it all about?

Skeleton dinosaurs are roaring and stomping around the halls. Replica alligators, model warriors, giraffes, cars, presidents, and everything in between are alive and moving in the museum! These things are so real that we can talk and interact with them. Ever wonder what it was like for Ben Stiller to experience such chaos in the movie, *Night at the Museum*? Unfortunately, these creatures, objects, and pieces of history on display cannot come to life. Yet, there is a bright side to this reality. According to the American Association of Museums, "there are over 850 million visits to American museums per year. [This is more] attendance than all major sporting events and theme parks combined!" As the public comes to visit a museum, those who work at museums make the visit's experience come to life.

There are degrees such as art history or anthropology and classes in colleges like Northwestern's "Museum Origins and Mission" or Cooperstown's graduate class "Museum Exhibition" that correspond with the type of work done in museums. IWU offers a class, "Museums, Representation, and Cultural Property," during May Term. According to Professor Gearhart, Associate Professor of Anthropology, this class "exposes students to how museums have acquired, displayed, and interpreted cultural objects and rep-

resented cultures, peoples, and heritage, in the past and present." This then "provides students with the background knowledge and hands-on experience necessary for confidently applying to internships at local museums..." and from there "these internships give an inside look into how museums operate, what the work of collections managers and curators entails, and prepare students for employment in museum work," says



Photo Courtesy of: MTV.com

Gearhart.

There are definitely ways to get involved with museums through academic studies, but what does a career in museum studies entail? Curator, museum tech, and conservator... have you ever heard of any of these or know what they do? They all contribute to the overall experience of a museum. A couple of things these positions do together are select the theme and design of exhibits, conduct and plan special research topics, acquire, store and exhibit collections, and also design the workshops and tours that visitors go through. These are a few commonalities, but these positions also differ.

**Curators** usually specialize in a certain field where they direct acquisitions, storage, and exhibits of collections; oversee research projects; involve themselves in fundraising and authorize the purchase of certain collections. What I

haven't told you yet, and what probably is the most important part is how does one become a curator? Well, curators usually get a master's degree in art, history, archaeology, or museum studies. One can start working in smaller scale museums on internships to gain knowledge of what museums really do and what it's like to work in such an environment.

**Onto the museum tech.** This position is more about taking care of museum items and assisting curators or scholars with utilizing the museum's collections. To get such a position as this, a bachelor's degree is recommended by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, as well as, training in museum studies or especially experience in designing exhibits.

Finally, the most important position, or at least in my opinion, is the **conservator**. This person's duties are to manage, preserve, treat, and document art, artifacts and specimens. Basically, everything we visitors see! These people usually specialize in a certain material or object so they can document the finding and treat the item to minimize deterioration and keep it close enough to its original state. A conservator might specialize in books, paintings, metals, or architectural materials and use x-rays or chemical tests to examine objects and determine the condition they need to be restored to. Conservators usually have a master's degree and substantial service performed in museums. The United States actually has only a few graduate programs with a specialty in museum conservation according to the United States' Bureau of Labor Statistics. This then leads to intense competition to get into these programs. Typical backgrounds of study include: chemistry, archaeology, studio art, or art history.

These positions really do contribute to the overall experience of a museum. For each (continued on page 2)

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## Interviewing for Introverts

[Seminar with Robyn Walter-IWU Career Consultant]

What do David Letterman, Tom Hanks, Steve Martin, Christina Aguilera, Harrison Ford, and Barack Obama all have in common? They're all introverts. In case you don't know what an introvert is, don't worry I'll tell you right now. According to Merriam-Webster's student dictionary, an introvert is "a person who is shy or restrained in speaking and behavior." On Thursday October 4th, Robyn Walter, a Career Consultant at the Hart Career Center, held a special seminar on "Interviewing for Introverts." The overall focus of the seminar was to explain basically what introversion was, how it can be utilized as a strength, and how it translates to interviewing.

Webster's dictionary definition of an introvert is not that bad of a basic building block to really develop an understanding of introversion. Some very key characteristics of introverts are that they are calm, self-contained, and like to observe. Their preferences for socialization are within small groups or even one-on-one time. Emotions usually stay inside and they need time to collect their thoughts. As Walter pointed out, this time needed to collect thoughts is an obstacle to overcome when interviewing. This is why practice is essential. Introverts' energy comes from internal experience, ideas, and feelings. They usually prefer written versus oral communication. For all of you introverts out there reading this do not worry. You are not doomed! There are some great methods to come over these humps you have to face.

Look at it this way: remember all of those famous people I listed in the first sentence of this article? They're all introverts but they can behave against their type. What does this mean for you? Well, you can be an introvert and also act against that as well. Think about it this way, Christina Aguilera had to be on stage and sing for thousands of people live at concerts. Does that seem very characteristic of an introvert? President Obama has to speak to various crowds every day for campaigning and also for congressional speeches that are televised all over the world. Does that seem like an introvert? No, neither of these examples shows signs of introversion. The point

I'm getting at is when it comes to an interview, there are ways to prepare and practice to act against your type, that being the introvert.

Walter gave some incredibly useful tips on how to really help prep for an interview if one is an introvert. First and foremost, make sure to prepare. By prepare, I mean try writing some things down about yourself-know who you are! Know the company or organization you're interviewing at. Lots of introverts, according to Walter, tend to be really good and comfortable in research. This is such a great advantage because before an interview, you want to research the organization. Some key factors to look at with the organization: products or services it offers, type of business, industry media, and the size of the company. All of this research can really give you an upper hand and show you've prepared for the interview. What if you freeze in the interview? Maybe my whole explanation of researching the company overlooked this very scenario. A solution to this is called the "question game." Throughout the day, as Walter recalled, these two roommates would randomly shoot each other interview questions. Not only is this a great way to think on the spot, but it also helps you prepare yourself for the types of questions you'll get and the types answers you may want to convey in the interview.

Finally, in the interview, the employer is going to toss the ball to you. Now you're going to need to toss the ball back to them. Show what you have to bring to the table. With behavior based questions make sure to approach answering them with the STAR method. Tell them the situation you were in, lay it out. Then describe the task at hand, what needed to be done. Moving forward tell them the action that actually took place. Why was that action taken? Lastly, tell them the result! There's no point in telling them the situation, task, and action without a result! Remember, anyone has what it takes to interview, introvert or extrovert. It's those who practice, practice, practice, that exceed and make the possibilities actual realities.

### Best Places to work from:

glassdoor.com

For the past four years (2009-2012), Glassdoor has conducted a survey: "Employee choice-awards-Best places to work." This is a list of the top fifty best places to work according to employees. This really gives an insight to what employees value about their organization. Here are the top five employers on the list:

- 1. Bain & Company** 4.7/5 stars
  - "Learning experience in a great culture"
  - "Bain is a fun learning environment where you can have a real impact right away"
- 2. McKinsley & Co.** 4.3/5 stars
  - "Fantastic opportunity to broaden your career options"
  - "Gave me everything I needed to do anything I ever wanted"
- 3. Facebook** 4.3/5 stars
  - "Won't ever have an opportunity like this ever again in my career-phenomenal company and people"
  - "Best. Job. Ever."
- 4. MITRE** 4.1/5 stars
  - "Good place to work for people who seek stable and idle life"
  - "It's a pleasure to wake up in the morning and go to work"
- 5. Google** 4.0/5 stars
  - "Great Company. Team REALLY matters"
  - "There are many things to love about working at Google, but the PEOPLE that work here are the best."

\*To find the complete list, go to [http://www.glassdoor.com/Best-Places-to-Work-LST\\_KQ0,19.htm](http://www.glassdoor.com/Best-Places-to-Work-LST_KQ0,19.htm)

of these positions, it is recommended to start off in a small or local museum at the beginning of your career. By gaining experience, the opportunity to work in the bigger well-known museums becomes a better possibility. The key is to gain adequate experience first, and then you can apply for that dream job at the museum!

Now, let's get to the good stuff you've been waiting for: IWU students' experiences working in museums!



**Katelyn Scott**

At IWU: **Anthropology**

After IWU: **Gap year experience then Graduate School**

Katelyn Scott, '13, anthropology major, worked this summer at the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage. Prior to her internship, Scott took the museum studies course during May Term. She also studied abroad in Peru for a semester where she participated in an archaeological dig and did research on traditional medicine. Additionally, she volunteered at a museum in her hometown and for the IWU Archivist. It's diverse experience like this that can bring a lot to the table when it comes to applying for positions in museums. During her time at the Smithsonian she was the Campus and Community Intern. One of the three main festivals held there was the Campus and Community Festival where Scott, "for three weeks, prior to the festival, organized the scheduling for one of the small discussion stages. Once the festival started [she] managed the stage and did other odd jobs to make sure the program ran smoothly." What she truly enjoyed was never having a "typical day," things were always different. This semester, Scott is continuing her museum experience with an internship at the McLean County

Museum of History.

Her plans for post-college are to "take a year off to get more experience in a museum before pursuing graduate school for museum studies." Her first piece of advice for students is to "look for volunteer opportunities as soon as possible. Hands-on experience will help determine if museum work is for you."



**Catherine Bayles**

At IWU: **Anthropology and Educational Studies**

Currently: **Graduate Student at Coopersown in History and Museum Studies**

Catherine Bayles, '11, anthropology and educational studies major, interned at the education department of the McLean County Museum of History while at IWU. This was the time where she was able to "fully appreciate the interdisciplinary nature of museums." Beyond IWU, she was recently the Exhibitions Development Intern at the Field Museum of Natural History. Through this position, she was able "to apply knowledge gained from undergraduate and graduate work to a leadership role." She was a manager and mentor to about ten undergraduate interns and further developed the "educational skills she already had from IWU." For Bayles, "pursuing a graduate degree in museum studies is one of the best decisions [she's] made thus far." Currently, she is a student at Coopersown Graduate Program, associated with the State University of New York at Oneonta, and doing research at the New York State Historical Association concerning Ipad textbook technology in classrooms while assisting in grant writing as part of her TA position. Her

advice to students is to "make contacts with whoever you can find in the field [because the museum field is so small and specialized]. Seek out professionals and ask how they got there."



**Lisa Kopp (McKee)**

At IWU: **Political Science**  
Currently: **Visitor Services Coordinator, National Geographic**

Lisa Kopp (McKee), '07, political science major, actually had plans to go on to law school after graduation. After taking every art history class available [she] decided to switch [it] up last minute and [apply] to graduate school for art history." She already interned at the McLean County Arts Center for two semesters and really got a sense of "what it is like to work at a small arts organization." While there, she was able to assist in curatorial duties, administrative tasks and grant research. She went to Georgetown University for graduate school and interned at "the National Building Museum creating education programs based on architecture and art." She was hired full time, but by her surprise, after applying to National Geographic, she also had a chance to interview there. She excelled on both interviews and got hired! With three promotions in three years, she now "manages a staff of twenty that creates education programs and handles curriculum development for NG-branded exhibitions."

So, what's the industry outlook? Curators, museum techs, and conservators are projected to rise in employment by an average of sixteen percent over the next eight years. The Department of Labor predicts "museum attendance [will] rise over the coming decade, museums should remain financially healthy and schedule additional building/renovation projects." Visit a museum! Although not physically possible, the experience can truly come to life for you.