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Career Center, Illinois Wesleyan University

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CAREER PROFILE

a look at life outside Illinois Wesleyan University

INTERN PROFILE: Alex Sebens '13 Sam McCormack '14 Illinois Heart and Lung Foundation

What are you studying at IWU?

SM: I am a sophomore biology major.

AS: I am studying business with a concentration in marketing.

What is your title at Illinois Heart and Lung Foundation?

SM: Continuing Medical Education (CME) Intern

AS: Women's Health Night Program Coordinator Intern

How did you hear about this position, and why were you interested in it?

SM: I found out about this organization through my sorority, Kappa Kappa Gamma. The Illinois Heart and Lung Foundation held a fundraiser that we volunteer with annually. Through this networking opportunity, I was able to get an interview. I was very interested to work in the hospital because I would like to go into the medical profession. So this was a great opportunity to learn more about the field.

AS: I heard about the position through TitanCareerLink! I immediately became interested when I saw it was a not-for-profit organization and that it was for marketing/event planning.

Event planning is something that I have always been passionate about, and the internship promised to help increase my knowledge about that.

What do you typically do at your internship?

SM: I help the Executive CME Director coordinate the CME activities and meet essential areas of compliance.

AS: A typical day involves emailing the organizations that are involved in Women's Health Night, creating and editing letters, organizing meetings for my boss and me, and making phone calls. For the most part, I am in charge of the event's correspondence.

What has been the most enjoyable or challenging part thus far?

SM: The most enjoyable part of my internship is meeting new people. I keep finding new positions in the medical field that I didn't even know existed. This opportunity is opening doors I didn't know were there.

AS: The most enjoyable part has been working with my boss and the other intern, Sam. Even though there are only three of us, I have truly enjoyed the small setting we work in. I'd say we have a lot of fun but work extremely hard to get the job done!

Has this increased your interest in this type of work?

SM: Definitely. I am more confident that the medical field is the right track for me.

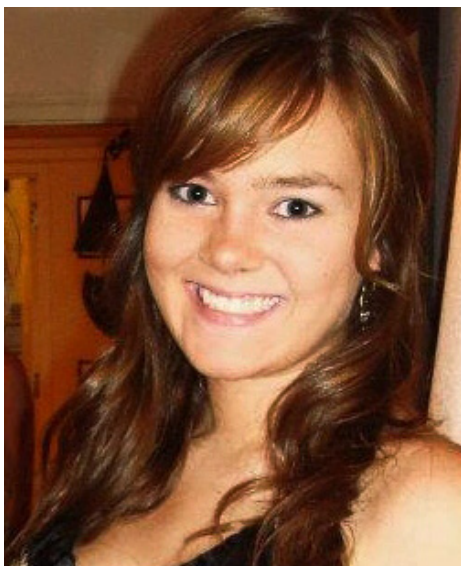
AS: Absolutely! I have really enjoyed seeing how a not-for-profit works from the inside. It is a totally different experience and very rewarding. I can't wait for Women's Health Night and to actually meet the people that will benefit from it!

Is there anything in particular you have learned from this internship?



SM: I have learned to become more organized and to stay calm under pressure.

AS: I have learned how much hard work and effort go into a large-scale event. There is trouble-shooting, dealing with all different types of people, and being responsible for a flawless execution of the event. There is a lot of pressure, but I love it! This internship has helped me prove to myself that event planning is the right career path for me!



**See the interns in action
at Women's Health
Night!
March 20th from 3:00
p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
at the ISU Bone Student
Center**

CAREER CONNECTIONS

a newsletter from the hart career center

February 2012

Council for IWU Women Connects Students to Mentors

On Feb. 24 and 25, Illinois Wesleyan will be hosting its Council for IWU Women Summit. This annual event is aimed at bringing female students and select alumni, faculty, and staff together to discuss career-related matters and learn how to best navigate in the working world.

The Council for IWU Women originated following a 2005 task force commissioned by the Alumni Council Executive Board. This research found that when university women were equally or more academically prepared than their male peers, they exhibited lower self-esteem and less confidence in their capabilities. IWU was no exception to this.

To remedy that, a working group from the Alumni Council came together to study how other universities were using alumnae to reach out to female students. From that, 36 women agreed to join the Council for IWU Women, and its first meeting was held in 2006. The first summit followed in 2007.

Director of Alumni Relations and a founding Council member, Ann Harding said, "The Council for IWU Women Summit is an opportunity for women to network with councilwomen who represent many areas of the country, a wide variety of professions, and different levels of life experience. When the Council began, we knew women needed strong

role models in the professional world, so we designed these summits to help develop a network even before graduation."

In the past, the summit has featured a broad assortment of speakers, panels, and events for participants. This year's keynote speaker is Carol Brandt, who will speak at the lunch on Saturday, Feb. 25. After graduating with a Bachelor of Music Education, she went on to receive her Master of Business Administration in Finance at DePaul University. Currently, she is the Senior Vice President and Wealth Management Advisor with Merrill Lynch. In 2009, she was recognized as one of Barron's Top 100 Women Financial Advisors, ranking at number 39.

In addition to hosting an array of events and workshops, the Council for IWU Women gives out four scholarships every year to deserving female students. The awards are \$250 each and are funded from out-of-pocket donations by councilwomen. Applicants are expected to describe their community and/or campus involvement, what they have learned from this experience, and how they have positively impacted the lives of women around them. Scholarship applications are available on the alumni web site TitanPride.org. Awards will be presented at the Feb. 25 luncheon.

As for the lasting impression of these summits, Harding explained, "Female students have often gained mentors, internships, and help with relocating to different areas from these events. This is a unique opportunity to get access to women who come back to IWU, solely for the purpose of offering knowledge, services, and connections to students and employees. It is something all women at IWU should participate in."



Students may RSVP for the following events by emailing Darcy Greder at dgreder@iwu.edu.

2012 Summit Schedule:

Friday, February 24th

- 11:45am - 1:00pm – Kick Off Celebration Luncheon (Young Main Lounge)
- 1:00pm – Practice interviews at the Hart Career Center (pre-register via Titan CareerLink)
- 3:00pm – Presentation – My Journey as a Peace Corps Volunteer (Hansen)
- 4:00pm – Cocktail School (Hansen)

Saturday, February 25th

- 9:30am – Welcome – coffee, light refreshments (Davidson Room)
- 10:00am - 10:45am – Panel Sessions (Davidson and Cartwright Rooms)
 - 1) Women's Health & Stress Mgmt.
 - 2) Beginning the Journey – How to Face the 2012 Job Market
- 11:00am - 11:45am – Panel Sessions
 - 1) Everything You Wanted to Know about Grad School
 - 2) Preparing for the Journey – Making the Most Out of Your Time at IWU
- 12:00pm – 2:00pm Closing Reception/Lunch (Main Lounge)

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The Professors' Perspective: enhancing education through internships

I have always heard life is what you make it. I think that is from a Hannah Montana song. (I just Googled it. It is. Yep. That's embarrassing...) This idea can pertain to just about anything, including bad pop music. When it comes to internships, it is important to remember to get the most out of them as well. From the viewpoint of professors who supervise student interns through their work experience, not only is this suggested, but it is critical.

Political science internship supervisor, Dr. James Simeone advises students as they pursue internships for credit during the academic year. For him, supervising and mentoring is all about collaboration.

"A few years back, the department created a second internship option," Simeone said. "This course was for students who are less interested in learning pre-professional skills, such as legal research, than in learning civic engagement and organizing skills. These are project-based, and we meet weekly as a group to discuss basic concepts in project management, such as mission statements, action plans, and the dynamics of organizational power and culture."

Dr. Vickie Folse assists student interns in a much different way. Because of the nature of medical internships, these students are observed more closely.

"I help students in nursing or health-related fields identify a healthcare agency they can partner with," Folse said. "These are typically agencies we have a long-term working relationship with. This is important because the School of Nursing needs a formal contract with the on-site supervisor for internships. Since interns will be providing direct patient care, there is a lot more direct supervision and a higher risk involved in the experience. Their supervisor is signed on as an adjunct professor, and they must constantly observe what the intern does to prevent malpractice suits."

Internships are classified as either for-credit or not-for-credit, creating different ways students can apply their work experience to their degree. While there are pros and cons to both, about 50 percent of students choose to take an internship for credit.

"We only have one student not pursuing an internship for credit this semes-

ter," Folse said. "This was because her particular internship did not meet the time commitment necessary to qualify for class credit. Because there is no monetary compensation for nursing majors during the school year, the majority of them choose to receive credit for their experiences."

"If you take an internship for credit, you are likely to put more into it and therefore, get more out of it," Simeone said. "But I also encourage students who have jobs unrelated to their field to volunteer one day a week with a community group to get some relevant experience. This will make them more competitive for a for-credit internship."

Within their separate spheres, both professors have noted the direct benefits of internships. Internship experience helps students stand out as a candidate and become more educated and well-versed.

"Students who have taken on internships go above and beyond the curriculum they receive in classes," Folse said. "We require all senior nursing majors to take courses in which they provide direct patient care. By spending at least three days out of the week in a hospital, they are getting hands-on experience with what the medical field is like."

"Another reason to take an internship is to discover purposes and projects that, lo and behold, you discover you care a great deal about," Simeone said. "Many professional jobs in government really end up being about advocacy, and it helps to know a variety of causes that you care about. Internships also develop civic leadership skills. In political science, we talk about democracy as a concept, but we don't spend a lot of time teaching students the basic skills needed to participate as an active citizen. Democracy is like jazz; there is a lot of improvisation and experimentation that happens once you are past getting the basic chords down."

With this, it is not surprising to know so many students have benefitted from internships. Many of them have opened doors to new opportunities, created contacts with people within their chosen field, and oftentimes, led directly to employment after graduation.

"One student's two internships helped

**Want credit for your internship?
Go to the Internship section of
the Career Center website to
learn more about how apply for
credit
<http://www.iwu.edu/ccenter>**

her get a \$30,000 Rotary Club grant, which she is using to pay for her master's degree in South Africa," Simeone said. "Current student, Dave Warren discovered his passion for city management as a result of his internships with the city of Bloomington. I could go on and on; the list is endless."

"Nursing students are often offered positions in the agency they interned with after they graduate," Folse said. "Because of that, many students take internships closer to where they live or want to live. We had one nursing major who commuted from Bloomington to the Chicago suburbs in order to work with a hospital near his hometown. So that is something to keep in mind."

Simply securing an internship is not where a student's responsibility stops, however. It is important to assure you are getting the most out of your internship beyond your daily assigned tasks.

"We often have students keep reflective journals that are sent to their faculty supervisor as well as their on-site supervisor," Folse said. "This helps them reevaluate their objectives and challenges them both as a person and a student. By having them think more deeply about their experience, students are able to get more out of it than simply work-related skills."

"If your goal is to 'get the credit' or fill in your resume, you will miss the point of an internship," Simeone said. "At some stage in your life, you need to start doing what you want to do for its own sake and not because it is what other people tell you or what 'the rules' say. Make it work. Dare to know."

If you're looking for an internship and not sure where to start, visit the Career Center to get started on your search! There are countless ways to find an opportunity that works for you.

Bridging the Gap between Intern and Employee

Many people take internships with the idea this will absolutely turn into a full-time job after graduation. While this is often the case for many people, it does not mean making the transition requires no extra effort on your part. Three IWU alumni shared their insight on how to turn your internship into a career.

2010 graduate Chris Brooks is currently a Public Affairs and Media Relations Specialist at COUNTRY Financial in Bloomington. After starting at IWU as a biology major with a pre-med concentration, he switched his focus to one of his first loves: writing.

"After I switched my major, I was eager to rebuild my resume and make up for lost time," Brooks said. "I started writing for the Argus and working in the Writing Center. The next logical step was finding an internship that would allow me to build upon the writing skills I had and get some valuable real world experience."

Brooks applied for and later accepted an internship with COUNTRY Financial in public relations. Although confident in his writing abilities, this field was completely new to him.

"Honestly, before Country, I knew very little about public relations and even less about insurance and finance," Brooks said. "In fact, after I changed my major, in a moment of post-switch terror, I bought a book about 'jobs for English majors.' After reading it, I listed my favorite jobs – public relations was number five. Nevertheless, the internship at Country sounded different, and above all, exciting. So I applied. After a year there, I came to discover I loved the work I did in PR. It was challenging and creative. Now, I can't imagine not working in this field."

Pay-Per-Click (PPC) Advertising Specialist at L2T Media, Susan Powalowski had a similar experience. She graduated from IWU in 2011 after majoring in international studies with a concentration in West Europe. Not only was pursuing a career in search engine optimization different from her degree, but it was a field she had never heard of before.

"Being someone who looks for interns now, I can say that those who go above and beyond are some of the most successful we have."

"I didn't even know this industry existed until an L2T Media representative came to Illinois Wesleyan!" Powalowski said. "But I had always found marketing interesting and grew up on the Internet. So it actually turned out to be a great fit. Had he not interviewed on campus, I never would've looked into this kind of career."

Powalowski had an on-campus interview with L2T Media for a full-time position but was later contacted about an internship in the same department.

"I accepted almost immediately," she said. "I wanted to have something to fall back on in case I couldn't secure a full-time job to start after graduation."

Class of 2011 alumna, Lori Johnson found interest in her field of work in a different way. While studying marketing at IWU, she discovered a way to fuse her interest in sports with her major.

"I knew going into school that I had an interest in sports marketing, having been an athlete all my life," she said. "I interned with Illinois State University Athletics to get a feel for the college sports side of things and thought that seeing a different side of sports marketing would be good."

From that point, she interned with minor league baseball team, the Normal CornBelters. Today, she works as a Partnerships Services Coordinator for them.

"I was definitely interested in a career in sports before coming to the CornBelters," Johnson said. "However, during my time as an intern, it confirmed that this was what I wanted to do. I got to see many different sides to the business and learned a lot about what I was looking for in a potential career."

However, the bridge from intern to full-time employee was not a simple one to cross. All three graduates assured their best work shined through at all times during their internships.

"On every assignment I was given



as an intern, I worked my hardest and showed a desire to learn and improve," Brooks said. "I wasn't afraid to try things differently or to fail. People took notice. That work ethic, more than anything, is what convinced COUNTRY to take me on full-time."

"I think showing a genuine interest in learning everything I could about the industry really showed L2T Media my dedication," Powalowski said. "Most entry-level employees here know little to nothing about both SEO and PPC, so upper-level management definitely looks for continuing interest in the subject. I accomplished this by using my free time to educate myself about the different tools we use and the latest innovations as published online by the experts in the field."

For students who have already had internships and hope to find employment with that company later, our alumni had some tips to make it happen.

"Students looking to get hired from companies that they interned with need to take the initiative to go the extra mile," Powalowski said. "Keep in contact with former employers so you're always on their radar. Remember - the ball is ALWAYS in your court."

"Being someone who looks for interns now, I can say that those who are self-motivated, go above and beyond, and ask me how they can help are some of the most successful we have," Johnson said. "Also, have a genuine interest in the company. You may only be there for a short amount of time, but learn everything that you can while you are there! It will help you to prove that you are necessary to the company when you start looking for a job."