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Career Center, Illinois Wesleyan University

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Beyond the Bubble

a look at life outside Illinois Wesleyan University

Intern Profile:

David Nutt

Music/Business Major, Class of 2010

Production Internship

Ravinia Festival Association, Summer 2008

David, what exactly goes on at Ravinia Festival?

It's an outdoor music festival in Highland Park that has programs every night during the summer. The Chicago Symphony Orchestra has their summer residence at Ravinia so during the summer that's what a lot of the programming is. Ravinia also has pop acts that come through, but basically they're a non-profit organization that puts on daily concerts.

Can you give me an example of some of the groups that actually played there this summer?

Matisyahou, Feist, Willie Nelson – some big names like that. But then they held a lot of classical programming too.

What interested you about this internship? How did you get it?

I went to a bunch of shows at Ravinia growing up and I was looking for an internship in the music-business industry. I was looking at their website one day and saw this position listed and knew it was right for me.

On a day-to-day basis, what was your role?

I was in the production department so I assisted with just about everything that has to happen for the concerts they put on. A lot of what I did was driving people around; bands or performers usually. I'd go pick them up at O'Hare and give them some information, take them to Ravinia, and ask them when they

wanted to be picked up for rehearsal. When I was actually at the venue we did things like make profiles for the artists, take care of dressing room maintenance, expense tracking for whatever our costs



were, and some basic office work. So I definitely got a bit of the business aspect as well.

What was your role during the show?

During the show, we're constantly setting equipment up. There's a whole deal with the dressing rooms where the artists have riders in their contracts to get them, basically, everything they want. One artist might need, say, 15 bags of M&M's and you really never know ahead of time what sort of demands the artists are going to make. For example, for Matisyahou we had to buy all kosher

items. During the actual concert was usually the biggest downtime. We would do office work during that time. Then again, there might be some emergency during the show and then, of course, we would have to drop what office work we might be working on and go help out. So basically I did a little bit of everything.

Were any of the artists you worked with real "drama-queens?"

Yeah, I actually had kind of a traumatizing experience. There was this pianist who was playing with the Chicago Symphony and I went to pick him up in his hotel. To backtrack a bit, when we go to pick someone up we don't really know what the people look like at all. My supervisors would always just tell us the artist's name and where we needed to pick them up. So I would show up at these hotels with a badge on that says "Ravinia" and then I'd just kind of wait in the lobby looking around for people that might be musicians.

So, I'm waiting around for maybe twenty minutes and I don't see anyone. I mean, there's one guy sitting and casually reading a newspaper up at the front but I don't think that's the guy because I'm standing here with this big thing on that says "Ravinia" and I'm looking at him and getting no response.

Finally he gets up and starts peering around and turns to me and says "Are you my ride?" So I confirm with him and then all of a sudden he starts getting really upset with me, yelling "You are so late! (Bubble Continued on Page 2)

All Students, Beware! Flailing Economy Leads to Substantial Decrease in Hiring

Everywhere you turn, it's there. Whether you're picking up a newspaper, turning on the TV, or (hey!) even grabbing the latest copy of "Career Connections", the creeping, foreboding screams of our nation's economy have become inescapable. Understandably, these uncertain economic times can leave even the most confident of upcoming graduates a little shaky in the knees. After all, when mass media outlets are referencing the Great Depression with greater frequency than the latest Paris Hilton escapade, there's a good chance it might not be the ideal time to be searching for a job.

During his presentation at the 15th Annual Midwest ACE Trends in Recruiting Conference this past November 21, Dr. Phil Gardner of Michigan State might have summed up the situation best with his presentation title: "Hanging From a Cliff - The Real World greets 2009 Graduates." In his report, based on the responses of 945 employers, Gardner reports that the sharp contraction of the labor



market will lead to a total decrease in hiring of 8% compared to last year. In addition, only 29% of companies have definite plans to hire new college graduates - and this with an estimated 1.1 million new grads seeking jobs!

Clearly, IWU graduates in the near future face a very challenging market. Complicating matters even further is the fact that experienced workers who have recently lost jobs will be competing with new grads for starting jobs, simply out of necessity. This means relevant experience in a field is more crucial than ever. According to Gardner, some employers are requiring two to three previous internships so job candidates are ready to be developed into full-time hires.

In his own presentation, Dr. Larry Hanneman of Iowa State University reports that those grads without internship experience are 30% less likely to gain employment when matched up

with a grad who has equal academic achievement and internship experience. Simply put, with the market tighter than ever before, employers are expecting more out of students.

Although Gardner says, "the problems we face are deeply entrenched and will not be easily solved," there are some spots in the economy that are brighter than others. The most sought after majors in 2009 include Accounting, Business Administration, Computer Science, Environmental Sciences, Nursing, Health Technicians, and Agricultural Sciences. Likewise, in his article "Five Hot Jobs in a Cool Economy" Brett Freeman reports that the roles of financial planner, pharmacy technician, physician assistant, accountant and teacher are expected to see significant growth in the next few years.

Don't give up hope if your major or desired profession is not listed above, though. There's still plenty of time to develop dominant skills to give you an edge for any job. The first and most important step is to avoid what Gardner refers to as "the stereotype of being aimless job surfers who have the luxury of waiting several years after graduation to commit to the world of work." For Gardner the new mantra that should be on every college student's lips is as follows: "Be focused, directed, and connected."

To do this Gardner recommends that students develop the capability to take initiative and build working relationships. In addition, the ability to plan and manage a project without instruction can be a major asset to any job seeker. (Trends Continued on Page 2)

Make an Issue

How to prepare for differences between IWU and work.

Would you like to Teach For America?

Check out our special issue on the back page!

Trends Cont.

According to the information presented at the Recruiting Trends Conference, our generation is notorious for needing a 15 page syllabus for every aspect of life. In order to be an attractive job candidate, you're going to need to learn how to manage difficult tasks without a clear roadmap.

In short, though, the upcoming year will undoubtedly be a challenging one for those seeking employment. There are no quick fixes to the mess our economy is in, but there are measures you can take to increase your chances of employment. Enhanced communication, management, and overall workplace functionality will almost certainly give you a leg up on the competition. And in this economy? Chances are you'll need every advantage you can get.

Beyond the Bubble Cont.

I need to be at rehearsal in five minutes. If I don't get all my rehearsal time in, I'm canceling. I tell you, I'm canceling!"

So I start really worrying, because obviously if he cancels that would not be good. And he really freaked out, I mean the whole time I drove him he was yelling at me that I wasn't professional, that I didn't address him, and that I didn't find him. And I was just terrified.

Eventually, the guy did calm down and did not, in fact, cancel the show. But yeah, some of the classical people were generally the most difficult. At least at times. For the most part, though, everyone was really pleasant.

What were your hours like working at Ravinia this summer?

The hours were kind of crazy. It was 40 plus hours a week, sometimes it would

reach up to 60 hours a week. A lot of times I would get there at, say, 4:30 in the afternoon and then leave at 3:00 in the morning. Part of that, too, was sitting around and waiting for artists who maybe wanted to go to a party and then I'd have to sit around and wait to take them home.

What was the most important thing you learned from this internship?

I guess I learned somewhat about how a music venue runs. I got to sit in on a couple management meetings, so I got just kind of a background, backstage look at how an organization like Ravinia operates. All in all, it was pretty cool.

College Vs. Work

The transition from school to your first real job is, understandably, an enormous one. Still, simply being aware of some of the major differences between college and work can help you present yourself as a more appealing employee. Likewise, preparing yourself for a new set of rules can help you avoid frequent business etiquette mistakes that leave employers wincing. According to JobBound (www.jobbound.com), there are four major differences to prepare for:

1) **Independence vs. Teamwork** – At school, you're generally on your own to complete assignments and more often than not your grade isn't reliant on your ability to collaborate and build upon the contributions of others. In the workplace, corporate objectives override individual performance. You're expected to play nicely with others and combine talents to reach a desired level of performance.

2) **Individuality vs. Conformity** – As most know well, college is a time to experiment and find your identity. In developing your uniqueness, then, you can do things like wear spandex and a cape to class (and potentially fight crime on the side). At work, though, you'll face a corporate dress code, in addition to time constraints, structure, and the occasional rigid rule. If your boss asks you to have a report on their desk by 8:30 a.m., they really mean 8:30 a.m. That day, too.

3) **Entitlement vs. Duty** – According to JobBound, one of employer's biggest complaints with our generation is that we expect promotions and outlandishly high positions/salaries without actually earning them. Realistically, most will face a much slower corporate ascent than they might like. New hires have to work their way through the ranks like everyone else, no matter where you graduated from or how many honors you've received. If that means making copies for the first month of your job, you just might have to prepare yourself to do it.

4) **Equality vs. Hierarchy** – Again, corporations have a clear structure and design. You will have a boss, who has a boss, who has a boss... and in most situations you will need to pay your respects to this hierarchy if you want to succeed in that organization. In a lot of cases, you'll be pleasantly surprised with the end results.

Upcoming Career Center Events

Date: 1/13
Event: **Intro to eRecruiting**
Time: 4 p.m.
Location: Buck 204

Date: 1/14
Event: **IWU Spring Teacher Recruitment Day**
Time: 11 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
Location: Young Main Lounge, Memorial Center

Date: 1/15
Event: **Resumes That Get Noticed**
Time: 4 p.m.
Location: Buck 204

Date: 1/21
Event: **Impress Me: Standing Out in an Interview**
Time: 4 p.m.
Location: Welcome Center Auditorium

Date: 1/27 and 1/28
Event: **Internships 101**
Time: 4 p.m. and 12 p.m.
Location: Welcome Center Auditorium

Teach For America

With job recruiting trends clearly suffering across the board, and with no definite timetable set for things to get better, it seems like a lot of upcoming graduates are seeking alternate post-graduate plans. Sadly, the first option many students turn to is to dig a hole (whether figurative or literal), climb in, and hope the economic downturn passes by before they need to come out for water. As you may have guessed, unless you're a top-notch boy scout this approach has several flaws.

Perhaps a more plausible option can be found with Teach For America. According to the organization's website (www.teachforamerica.org), their mission is "to build the movement to eliminate educational inequity by enlisting our nation's most promising future leaders in the effort." Those who get involved commit to teaching in low-income communities for at least two years before following whatever other career paths they may also be interested in.

Most importantly, admittance into the Teach For America corps requires no

previous background in education. In fact, anyone with a Bachelor's degree is eligible to apply. For example, Denise Boban, an IWU alumna who majored in Sociology and Hispanic Studies,



joined the corps after graduating in 2005. After teaching fifth grade for two years, Boban moved back to Chicago where she now works on the Teach For America Chicago staff.

According to Boban, the challenges are many. "Nobody, not even traditionally trained teachers, are fully prepared for a classroom full of low-income students," says Boban. Still, Boban's Teach For America experience had many advantages. As she says, "You get to make a direct

impact right away on one of our nation's most pressing issues and learn skills that are characteristic of great leaders in any setting."

Boban also says IWU students considering Teach For America should be "passionate about impacting kids' lives, eager for a tremendous challenge, and excited to develop their leadership skills." Again, the benefits of working with Teach For America extend beyond just education. "Many remain in education, but others go on to careers in law, journalism, business, or medicine," says Boban.

So how do you get started? The first step is to apply via Teach For America's website. **The next application deadline is February 13** and it is the last opportunity to apply to Teach For America until September. Don't hesitate to stop by the Hart Career Center with any questions. Teach For America might be just the two year experience for you after graduation. As Boban says, "It is an incredible challenge day in and day out. But not impossible."

Upcoming Job Fairs Offer Great Chance to Start 2009 Off Right

Well, it's officially the new year, 2009, but that doesn't mean your chances to find a summer job or internship have vanished along with 2008. Even if you missed out on the Fall Job and Internship Fairs, this upcoming February offers plenty of opportunities to make good on those resolutions and land the perfect work experience for you.

For starters, on February 13 the ISCPA (Illinois Small College Placement Association) will host CareerFest. According to the ISCPA's website (www.iscpa.org), "The purpose of CareerFest is to connect quality student and alumni candidates from ISCPA member schools with Illinois employers who want to hire for their job and internship positions."

The event is open to all majors and with such a wide variety of employers there are likely to be wonderful opportunities for everyone. Some of the employers attending this year include

Six Flags Great America, the Social Security Administration, and Wells Fargo Financial.

To those interested, CareerFest will run from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. (with a lunch



break) at the Drury Lane Theatre in Oakbrook Terrace. Students can stop by the Hart Career Center now to pre-register for \$10. The deadline for pre-registration is Friday, February 6, after which time onsite registration will be the full \$20.

If you are a teacher candidate, the ISCPA also hosts TeacherFest on February 19 from 12:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. The

event will again take place at Drury Lane Theatre and the same pre-registration fees apply. There are representatives from approximately 90 school districts at TeacherFest.

In addition to these ISCPA events, IWU and ISU offer both Spring Internship and Job Fairs at the ISU Bone Student Center. The Internship Fair will take place February 17 from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m., while the Job Fair will occur February 18 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

This IWU/ISU Spring Job Fair in particular is a great chance for seniors to try and secure post-graduate employment this year. That said, this certainly is not a senior only event. All students are more than welcome! If you have any questions, or would like some excellent tips on how to be successful at a job fair, be sure to visit the Hart Career Center or call at x3071.