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Company, Students Find Success Through Internships

Nov. 18, 2013

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.— Never doubt the power of a good internship. From event planning and finance internships, to government and not-for-profit internships, the students at Illinois Wesleyan University have done it all.

Laurie Diekhoff, assistant director and internship coordinator at the Hart Career Center, advises that applying sooner is better than later as deadlines for summer internships might be approaching. “Also, deadlines depend upon the industry and the type of organization,” said Diekhoff. “Now is the time to apply if you’re interested in large organizations that have well-developed internship programs. Most of them hire in the fall. Smaller businesses, non-for-profit and government will be looking to hire summer interns early in the spring semester.”

Diekhoff added that there are three steps for gaining real world experience. “One – get ready to apply, or that is work on your resume, and have it reviewed. Two – look for opportunities. Three – apply, and interview.”

According to Diekhoff, IWU has a long list of companies dedicated to recruiting its students.

“Our students do such a great job of interning. They are bright, motivated and responsible. So once an employer has a good experience with an IWU student intern they tend to come back. We always have employers contacting us with potential internship opportunities,” said Diekhoff.

One company proud of its connection to IWU is Revolution Dancewear LLC. Based in Niles, Ill., the company is a young manufacturer, partnering exclusively with dance studios to sell shoes, dancewear and costumes. For two consecutive years, Revolution Dancewear LLC has hired IWU students as interns and in the past four years, the company has hired three IWU alums in full-time positions.

Alumna, Jenilee Houghton, who is senior director of creative development at Revolution Dancewear LLC, Class of 2005, said, “Many candidates apply for our job openings who have fantastic educational backgrounds. One of the differentiators that I’ve seen with Illinois Wesleyan candidates also happens to be one of the aspects that I’m most grateful for during my time as an undergrad-- the opportunity to pave your own path.”

Another IWU alum, Celeste Kelley, Class of 2013, was hired at Revolution Dancewear LLC as a summer intern in May 2013, and was hired full time in August 2013.

Costume named Gravity was designed by Caitlyn Trevor, Class of 2014, as a part her internship for Revolution Dancewear LLC.

Photo credit: Revolution Dancewear LLC



Kelley attributed her success in the work place to the rigorous schedule of an IWU student. “Wesleyan prepared me for the working world in many different ways. The first of which is that I learned how to juggle many different tasks at once,” said Kelley.

“Revolution Dancewear LLC is a business that moves incredibly fast and so each day is a new adventure,” said Houghton. “Our interns work on a variety of projects from creating a digital fabric library to organizing a new workspace. It's always been important to me that our creative internship opportunities are rewarding and fulfilling.”

According to Houghton, Kelley was given the chance to run wardrobe for a week-long photo shoot, where she assisted the company with more than 1000 photos of their dancewear products. “She did such an amazing job that we offered her a full-time position in the production department and we were thrilled that she accepted,” said Houghton.

Another IWU intern for Revolution Dancewear LLC, is Caitlyn Trevor, Class of 2014, who is a majoring in music with a minor in theatre arts at IWU. Trevor was interested in the costume design side of business. “She spent time working through our design process and we even gave her the opportunity to try designing a costume for our customers,” said Houghton. “She did such a great job that the costume was approved and can now be found in this season's costume collection.” Trevor's design, named Gravity, can be seen on the Revolution Dancewear LLC website at <http://www.revolutiondance.com/gravity-products-633.php>.

For more information about Revolution Dancewear LLC visit www.revolutiondance.com.

For more information regarding internships, check out the [Titan CareerLink](#) or stop by the Hart Career Center, located in the Minor Myers, jr. Welcome Center.

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