MCPRSSA Attends PRSSA 2019 International Conference

by Madison Richards

Manhattan College junior, Madison Smith, and senior, Emily Anderson, attended the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) International Conference from October 18 to 21, leaving behind chilly New York for sunny San Diego, CA. Both Smith and Anderson serve on the executive board of the Manhattan College PRSSA chapter (MCPRSSA), in which Smith acts as the operations coordinator and Anderson as the secretary. During their time at the conference, the two members received firsthand knowledge from experienced professionals about numerous career opportunities in public relations. They attended various chapter development sessions and listened to highly esteemed keynote speakers, including representatives from Edelman, Disney, Sony, VOX Global, and Fleishman Hillard.

Smith stated, about the experience, "[The] International Conference was such an unforgettable experience because I was not only able to hear from incredible speakers and PR professionals, but I was also able to connect with other PRSSA students from across the country."

In order to gain the most insights from the range of professionals, Smith and Anderson separated to attend different workshops. By dividing and conquering the workshop sessions, the students were able to bring back impactful lessons for their fellow MCPRSSA members. Of the advice they received from the workshops and speakers, a few significant remarks stood out. First, authenticity is incredibly important in public relations. Second, it is paramount that your "professional self" aligns with your personal values. Thirdly, the key to a successful PR career is the four c's – clarity, creativity, critique, and collaboration. Ultimately, the students learned the differences between life at a corporation versus life at an agency and that there exists a glass ceiling in the PR industry, which is comprised of pay disparities between men and women.

MCPRSSA members will have an additional opportunity to travel and learn from professional development sessions in the spring of 2020 at the national assembly in Scottsdale, Arizona.