the comm-unity newsletter

Highlighting Shining Stars: Fall 2023 Student Internships

By Sterling Grant

During the summer and fall of 2023, communication majors have interned at some amazing companies and firms across all of New York City. The Communication Department at Manhattan College prides itself on one of its main goals, which is to guide students to take advantage of internship opportunities in their area of interest and thereby prepare themselves for their future endeavors and careers.

Olivia Donovan is a senior concentrating in public relations with a minor in psychology. This summer, she started her internship at the multinational law firm, Cleary Gottlieb. While this internship was in the hybrid (virtual and onsite) model, she worked at the firm's headquarters in the financial district of lower Manhattan doing internal communications and partnering with the public relations team. Going into the Fall 2023 semester, she was asked to extend her internship with the company and get course credit for her diligent efforts.



Olivia Donovan

Donovan worked in the Internal Communications Department at Cleary Gottlieb.

Her requirements at work entailed "mostly copy editing. I would copy-edit drafts sent to me or draft ideas people have into something they would copy-edit. I also manage internal digital communications throughout the company like sending announcements to employees, promoting fundraisers, and coordinating when they should be released or removed. I shadowed a lot of business meetings, prepped communications plans for how projects would be solved, and drafted service anniversaries for employees."

According to Donovan, the most beneficial course she took at Manhattan College was COMM 309: Digital Writing for Marketing Communication.

"That course taught me how to write from a business perspective, and it helped me learn different styles of business writing, which is incredibly important working at a law firm," she said. "The tone is different from a PR agency, so having a variety of assignments aided me in that sense."

While applying the lessons and skills she has learned from her courses at Manhattan College, Donovan has participated in many projects for the company. "I did a community engagement project by partnering with a local high school in the area to help students get acclimated to the law industry and get a taste of what an internship might be. I was asked to help increase employee engagement with that. And I am currently working on expanding our service anniversary notes to become global. The company has offices all over the world, so it is important for all employees to receive a message."

With her extended time spent at the law firm, Donovan believes

her biggest takeaway from the internship is self-reflection and growth. "The people you work with matter. This job has shown me that I do not want to be a lawyer, but not because I see people hating their jobs. The team I work with has a lot of passion for the work they do, and they have supported me professionally and personally," she said. "In my interview, they asked me to list three things about myself and how someone else would describe me. At the time, that was not a question I was prepared for, but after working with them I found out how critical it was. Working with a team that you have developed a connection with and feel supported by makes the work more enjoyable."

Brylee Watkins is a senior with a double concentration in media production and public relations and a minor in film studies. This fall semester, Watkins interned with a live-entertainment company, Running Subway Productions, based in Manhattan. She worked most heavily with Rise-NY, the company's latest production attraction.



Brylee Watkins

Running Subway Productions is a live entertainment production company that conceptualizes, produces, markets, and manages iconic productions and exhibits. They specialize in production, general management, venue operations, and marketing. Watkins said her daily duties at the company "varied from day to day. I often worked as an executive assistant doing varied office runs and helped to make travel itineraries. I also did a variety of research on tourism

engagement in Times Square and future production outreach contacts, and managed our group sales email and booking."

Watkins believes that her courses as a communication major helped her with

"properly conducting research. I felt confident to give my opinions about press releases and marketing strategies because of my experience in my courses," she said.

Watkins's biggest takeaway from this experience with Rise-NY was how interesting it was to learn first-hand about discussions on creating a brand. "Since this is the company's latest production endeavor and it is so new, the company is still solidifying its brand story and marketing. It was really interesting to learn first-hand how discussions on creating a brand are done," she said. "They recently began what they have named the "Torch Song Series." For this campaign, they have invited artists to perform on a stage attached to their venue. I helped coordinate two performances by Deanna Giulietti. A few days later, I saw TikToks she had made about the event, which was cool to see!"

Rebecca Kranich is a senior concentrating in journalism with a double major in psychology and communication and a minor in peace studies. This summer, Kranich interned with *Commonweal Magazine*, a Catholic publication based in Manhattan. The company is an independent magazine focusing on religion, politics, and culture. She worked there as an audience development intern. Kranich thrived in the hybrid internship and was also allowed to carry the internship into the fall semester for credit.

Commonweal Magazine is a commentary review-based magazine that creates a sense of community among its readers and supporters. Kranich's daily duties included "everything within the marketing realm. I did social media, organized emails, and a little writing as well," she said. "We had our fundraising event called "Commonweal Tuesday," back in November, that I was a part of. It was actually our 99th anniversary, so I put promotion videos together, did a lot of editing, and created brand recognition.



Rebecca Kranich

Kranich recognizes that her experience with being on the Executive Board of Manhattan College's newspaper, *The Quadrangle*, was extremely beneficial. "Having a student newspaper was great because of how much I was exposed to writing. I just finished serving as social media editor on the Executive Board, which helped me develop my advertising skills. Also, by taking an advertising course this semester, I became aware of how important branding and messaging are. Having this previous knowledge made me feel more prepared for the internship."

Krainch reflected on her experience during the internship and realized she was going in the direction she wanted. "This is my first advertising-heavy-based internship, rather than journalism or political science. This solidified that I want to do something that touches both journalism/poli sci and advertising.

I always knew I wanted to do something non-profit or do something for the greater good. At *Commonweal*, they fostered those concerns and made me feel like I was going in the right direction."

Together, as a department, we champion the hard work of Donovan, Watkins, and Krainch at their individual internships. They are putting in the effort to apply their opportunities, further their education, and reach their career goals. 