

Rukel Faulcon's summer

CNN internship opens eyes of student

by Rukel Faulcon

Michael Johnson, Dominique Dawbes, Charles Barkley, and Rukel Faulcon. Do you know what these people have in common? They all were in Atlanta this summer.

Asked to write about my CNN internship experiences in Atlanta, I didn't know where to start. Then it dawned on me, to just tell my story. In the spring, I applied for an internship with CNN Sports. In actuality I applied thinking there's no way I would get this. I didn't think I would be chosen from the hundreds of applications they get every semester. The months went by and I totally forgot.

I was watching TV one evening and my phone rang. I answered the phone thinking it would be a friend of my parents but it was an advisor from CNN. She notified me that I had gotten the internship and could start right after my classes at the end of the semester.

After two weeks at home, I was on my way to Atlanta. It was so amazing. The first day, I was quite nervous. After a few days of getting to know the editors, anchors and fellow interns it was like being at home with old friends. It seemed as though everyone knew each other for years.. New interns came in about two or three weeks apart. By the end there were twenty to thirty interns coming and going during my stay.

I lived for three months with my sister and her roommates, which was fun and convenient. In Atlanta I had to learn about many other things, besides sports. I had to learn how to edit video, work a computer properly and learn my way around CNN and Atlanta. I drove to work almost each day and it definitely was an experience in itself. On those most unfortunate days I would take MARTA, the subway, not so bad until the Olympics came to town.

In Atlanta I got to meet and talk to some of the everyday people you saw during the Olympics. Meeting Michael Johnson was one of the highlights of the summer for me. Working in the sports department, I was able to see members of Dream Team II like Charles Barkley, Scotti Pippen and Gary Pattern.

Others came into the studios to do a show; such as, Sheryl Swoops, one of the members of the women's gold medal basketball team, and swimmers Janet Evans and Jerry Hall, both gold medal swimmers. Political figures were there as well. Jesse Jackson stopped by to wave and to chat.

The internship itself was fun, but strenuous. My hours on

Tuesday were from 11-4 p.m.; Wednesdays and Thursdays I worked from 5 a.m.- 1 p.m., while on Saturdays I worked from 6 a.m.- 2 p.m. Mondays, Fridays and Sundays were mine.

Most of the time I worked more hours because you really worked according to the games you picked. Most of the games were baseball and they lasted for hours. There were other games though, like the NBA playoffs, soccer, boxing, tennis, football and the Olympics.

Working overtime was part of the job. I didn't complain, I just slept most of my day away and

got up in time to run my daily errands, and then got ready for work.

Many days stand out as memorable, but the night I remember most was Friday, my day off. My roommate, some friends and I decided to go to Centennial Park. People were dancing in the streets and singing. It was a huge party that lasted for two weeks. Visiting almost all the different sites in the park, we went to Nike Park where you could pretend to be an Olympian. The park had life-size everything. You could be a basketball, volleyball, or soccer player for the day. You

could even be a yachter. There was a live Reggae band there giving a concert outside, and plenty of vendors, selling food to memorabilia.

When we got home, from our night out, our other roommates were so happy to see us. Naturally we wondered why.

We didn't know about "the bomb". I was on edge for the rest of the week.

After the bomb, there were many threats, especially at CNN.

There was even an evacuation of the building, which was odd. The Dream Team stayed in the Omni Hotel which is connected

to the CNN Center and everyone had to leave the building, including them. They stood outside waiting around like everyone else.

Overall, "Hotlanta" was hot, but it was fun.

I met so many people who worked in other departments at CNN. I even met interesting people just going to the grocery store.

I am reminded of my summer all the time and what an experience it was. I am keeping in contact with the interns and editors, and planning to visit during the Christmas break.



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