

THE HERALD

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Opportunities Lead to Valuable Experiences For Students

Cody Jeffery, assistant editor

After midterms finally end and spring advising begins, many students consider their options for internships and study abroad programs. According to meredith.edu, 15 percent of Meredith students complete at least one internship, 31 percent study abroad and 91 percent are employed or pursuing graduate studies within six months of becoming Meredith Alumna. This data shows a strong correlation between culturally experienced students with real world job skills and graduates finding jobs.

Many current Meredith students have completed highly competitive internships and study abroad programs. One such student is Senior Emily Hawkins. Hawkins spent her summer interning in the White House Presidential Personnel Office (PPO), which oversees the selection process for presidential appointments. In order to obtain high-end internships, Hawkins advises other students to

“start out small. My first internship was an unpaid social media internship. I will graduate having worked as an intern for political campaigns, the executive branch, the state legislative branch service [and] the private sector/non-profit companies which gives my degree much more credibility.”

Ms. Kristy Dixon, Assistant Professor in the Meredith College School of Business, also recommends students to complete multiple internships to find out what they like and don't like about the industry or career field. “By completing internships, students learn valuable skills that cannot be learned in academic settings. Interpersonal skills, communication skills and self-confidence are all gained by the experience,” said Dixon.

Other students strive to complete both an internship and a study abroad program, but worry that they won't have enough time or find the right programs to suit their individual goals. Senior, Caitlin Davis, found a way to uniquely combine many of her

ambitions into one program. While independently studying abroad through the IFSA-Butler Program in Australia, Davis also obtained an internship at a public relations company called Liquid Ideas, and joined an Australian Rules Football (AFL) team. As a player on a semi-professional rugby team in the United States called Venom, Davis was used to balancing sports, academics and work, but encountered an entirely new level of time management while abroad, “as tempting as it may be, you really have to be able to tell your friends that you can't go out with them tonight because you have to work on a paper that isn't due for another two weeks.”

Although Davis chose an independent program, Meredith offers a variety of semester long and summer long study abroad programs that interest many students. Senior Hillary Stone studied abroad in Italy through one of the Meredith programs. Stone loved her experience so much that she now works in the Meredith Office of In-

ternational Programs. “I learned how to be independent in a place where I can barely speak the language, have confidence in my ability to travel and making crucial decisions and make friends with people from all over the world along the way. And in the end... I came out with 11 sisters that I didn't have going in.”

Internships and study abroad programs are valuable experiences that every student should consider participating in. Not only do both opportunities add to student resumes, they have the potential to change and/or redirect a student's career goals and have a positive impact on a student's life. As Davis simply said, “it was the experience of a lifetime and [it] allowed me to see and experience so many new things.” For more information on how to start applying for internships or study abroad programs, contact your faculty advisor and/or the Office of International Programs.

The Power of “Slutoween”

Alyssa Mathewson, staff writer

In the high school, college and post-college worlds, Halloween is sometimes called “Slutoween,” articulating a trend where many of the costumes women wear are considered provocative. Women's Halloween costumes in major stores often have the word “sexy” in their descriptions. While many people don't have an issue with the current standard of Halloween costumes, some are wary of “Slutoween.” For women, Halloween presents the question of whether or not they feel empowered by their costumes.

Assistant professor of Religious & Ethical Studies and Prism director, Dr. Steven Benko says the term “Slutoween” refers to how Halloween “has become an occasion for women to perform their sexuality.” He suggests that the expectation created by sexualizing women's roles on Halloween could be felt as a burden on them. There are essentially two types of women's Halloween costumes: sexy and naughty. “There is a world of difference between them,” says Dr. Benko. Sexy, he explains, is empowering, but naughty implies women are “transgressing” against something. Some women, such as sophomore LeslieRose Brant, think that the point of Halloween may be to get attention, but not necessarily to be provocative. “The point of Halloween is to dress up as a portrayed character. It should be something you

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desire or appreciate,” says Brant. She feels that some “girls apparently respect playboy bunnies.”

Many feel that Halloween is a time women can use to empower themselves, to inspire attention that makes them feel good. If “Slutoween” feels like a burden, women's history specialist Suzanne Scoggins wants women to know they have other options. Her website, called Take Back Halloween: A Costume Guide for Women with Imagination, at <http://takebackhalloween.org>, is not a site that sells costumes, but rather a resource guide for creating a unique costume. Ultimately, women will wear a variety of costumes. While some women will be sexy Alice in Wonderland, others will be Captain Underpants.



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