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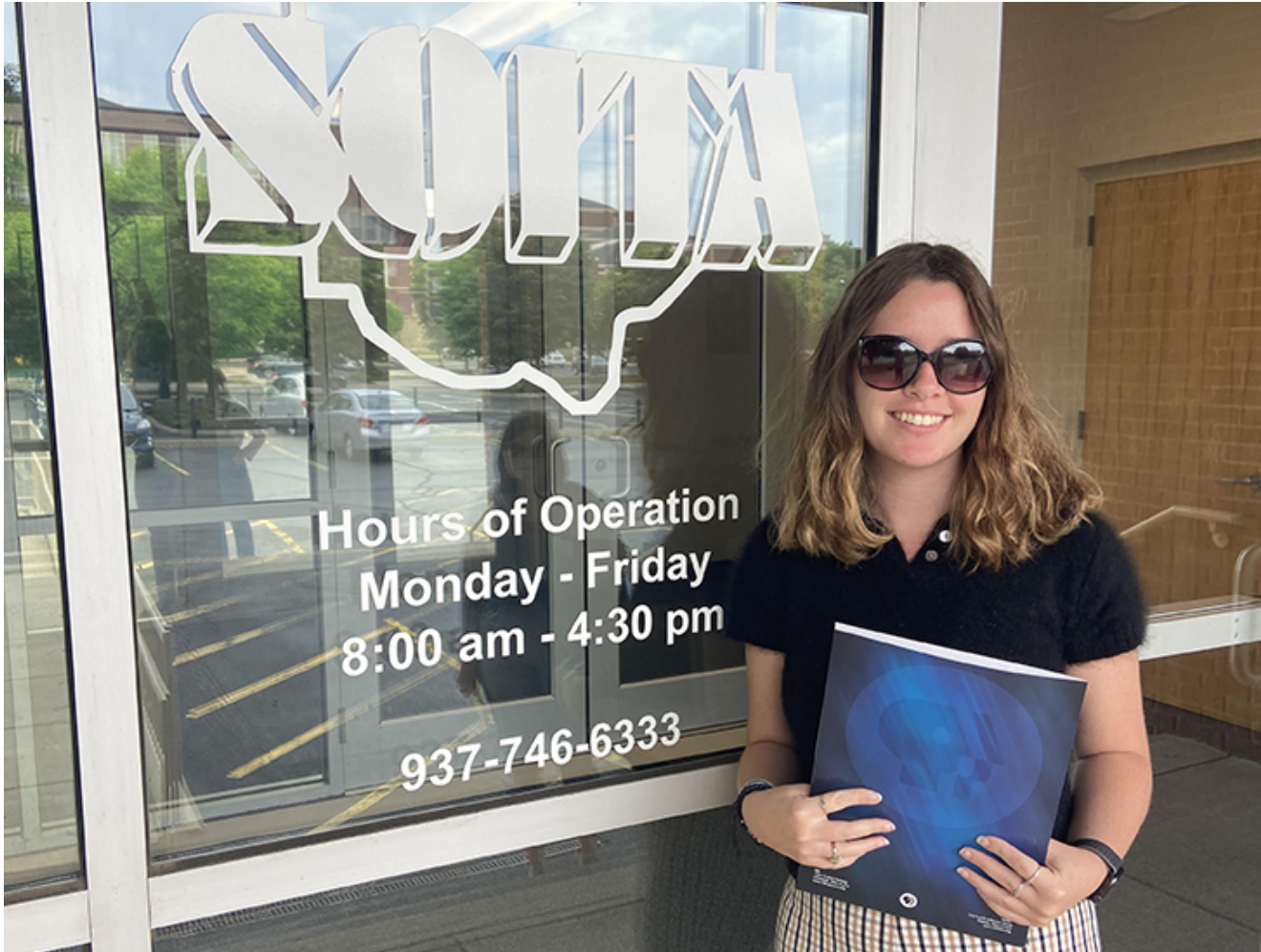
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Ethics and leadership internship leads to part-time job at ThinkTV for UD student

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Monday March 13, 2023

By Lucy Waskiewicz '24

Colleen Duffy's Ethics and Leadership Internship at Dayton PBS station ThinkTV was so successful it turned into a part-time job.

Duffy, a senior English major at the University of Dayton, was among 13 students in the first cohort of the Ethics and Leadership Internship program, launched in 2022 by the Fitz Center for Leadership in Community's Ethics and Leadership Initiative.

In addition to internships with the Dayton mayor's office, Five Rivers MetroParks and the Miami Conservancy District, among others, students had the curricular opportunity for ethics-centered reflection and learning.

“I had opportunities to expand on ethical situations and enhance my leadership skills through this internship,” said Duffy, who worked in development and marketing at ThinkTV. “For example, I was tasked with producing a commercial to be aired for the Kupanda Festival in west Dayton. I had to do a lot of research to make sure my 15-second spot was culturally representative of the people who speak Swahili, and I was able to create an advertisement that spoke to both people familiar with Swahili and those who weren’t.”

Duffy’s ThinkTV internship was scheduled to end a few weeks before the start of the 2022 fall semester. However, her supervisor had different plans.

“It was supposed to end in August, however, my boss asked me to come back and work part-time during the fall semester,” Duffy said. “I said yes, of course, and have been working there ever since.”

Christa Johnson, director of the Ethics and Leadership Initiative, said Duffy’s job offer was a thrilling end to the internship program’s first summer.

“We want placements that not only benefit our students, but benefit our partners,” Johnson said. “Colleen securing a part-time job following the internship program just shows we are doing just that. The program is not just job-training, it is relationship-building.”

The internship program is just one aspect of the comprehensive Ethics and Leadership Initiative. It offers a mini-course with a focus on values, leadership and virtues, as well as an undergraduate certificate that provides students with a foundation to help foster ethics and leadership in their daily lives.

Duffy said her experience working at ThinkTV influenced her post-graduate plans, redirecting her career path toward marketing and advertising. She hopes to work in her hometown at the Tampa, Florida, PBS affiliate after graduation.

“I’ve always been on track for law school, but being able to produce and create commercials with little to no creative constraints was an amazing opportunity for me,” Duffy said. “While I still see law school on the horizon, I loved working for PBS and their values reflect my own.”

Johnson said the pilot summer of the Ethics and Leadership Internship program was an enormous success.

“We more than doubled the number of interns and partners that we had originally planned on having for our pilot, and received amazing feedback from both the interns and our partners” she said. “Many partners expressed that they could not have run nearly as smoothly without our students there, and students consistently mentioned how much they learned.”

The curricular aspect of the internship also fostered bonding and advocacy among the students. Johnson said one of the themes that stood out to her throughout the internship program was the self-growth of each intern with the support of their peers.

“There were moments during which an intern either in our weekly gatherings or just in a one-on-one meeting with me expressed an issue they were having,” Johnson said. “I watched as the interns came together to support one another in those moments, in addition to providing my own personal mentorship. And, in each case, within a week or two, the intern advocated for herself and real progress was made for everyone.”

Many local organizations, including ThinkTV, will remain partners in summer 2023.

“We want this to be a program that can benefit an English major just as much as a business major,” Johnson said. “We want to benefit our nonprofit partners in the region, but also work to mold future professionals in the corporate world. There is not a single person who doesn’t benefit from having the space to reflect on their values and how they apply in their professions.”

For more information, visit the [Ethics and Leadership Internship website](#).