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International Educator



Center for International Education

Fall 2010

THE WASHINGTON CENTER OFFERS CREDIT INTERNSHIPS TO UNH STUDENTS IN ALL FIELDS



With UNH-Washington Center liaison Paula Dinardo (second from left) are, l. to r., UNH student interns Matthew Hayes, Nicholas Blanchette, Joelle Calcavecchia, and Christine Kratz.

UNH, in cooperation with The Washington Center (TWC), offers internships in our nation's capital. Washington, DC, is home to hundreds of think tanks, multinational corporations, agencies, and organizations. And as UNH-Washington Center liaison Paula Dinardo tells interested students, there are opportunities in all fields of study including the arts, communication, health and human services, business and economics, advocacy, science, law, international affairs, energy, journalism, and the environment. For more information, visit <http://www.unh.edu/washington/>. You can contact Paula Dinardo at paula.dinardo@unh.edu, at (603) 862-3485, or in Hood House 106. See the articles below from three recent internship recipients.

National Defense University was work

site for Joelle Calcavecchia

International affairs/political science dual major Joelle Calcavecchia was placed in the National Defense University's Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies.

Spring semester 2010, I was an intern in Washington, DC, with the National Defense University's Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies, also known as the NESACenter. Created in 2000, the NESACenter is the youngest of the National Defense University's five regional centers. Its participating countries include: Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Egypt, India, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Maldives, Mauritania, Morocco, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Tunisia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen.



Joelle Calcavecchia is on far left in front row

The NESACenter hosts many seminars every year which draw military and diplomatic officials from the NESACenter region and other United Nations countries. The purpose of these seminars is to enhance and build better relationships between and among nations. The participants range from generals to ambassadors and are placed in a classroom-like atmosphere where National Defense University professors teach them about American foreign and domestic policy. They also discuss contemporary issues facing the world today such as the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the Arab/Palestinian conflict, matters on terrorism, transnational issues, and environmental issues. As an intern, I had the opportunity to sit in on these discussions and network with the participants, guest speakers, and NESACenter faculty. My chief responsibilities were to assist with logistics, attend seminars, and take notes during group discussions. It was a truly engaging experience, and I felt privileged to be in the same room with these distinguished and exquisite people.

At first I thought these participants would be very intimidating, but to my surprise it was quite the contrary. The participants of the NESACenter region were warm and thoughtful. They were very inquisitive about American culture and also liked to share their own cultures with us. I had interesting informal conversations with many people from Lebanon, Israel, Palestine, Oman, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Yemen, Morocco, and the United States. It was an insightful experience to listen to their stories and learn about various perspectives on issues. For example, I talked with an ambassador from Israel and a general from Lebanon about the Arab/Israeli issue. It was interesting to hear their personal stories and thoughts, and really made me think differently about the current conflict. At the end of a seminar, many of the participants exchanged contact information and gave us small gifts to show us their appreciation. One of the generals from Iraq actually handed me a plaque from the Iraqi Army.

Outside of the classroom, we accompanied the participants to meetings around the D.C. area. We had sessions on Capitol Hill with members of the Foreign Relations and Intelligence committees. We also met at the Pentagon and State Department with senior military officials and ambassadors from the NESACenter region. I had the opportunity to go on my first business trip with the NESACenter. We traveled to Norfolk, Virginia, to conduct an important Pakistani military seminar. Here, we visited several interesting military bases including Langley Air Force Base, Norfolk Navy Base, and United States Joint Force Command.

I feel extremely grateful to have participated as an intern with the NESACenter because it has made me a stronger, more independent individual. I believe this has been the best academic decision and one of the best personal decisions I have made in my life. I find myself fascinated with the cultures of the NESACenter region and wish to pursue my career in the diplomatic field with emphasis on enhancing national security.

Christine Kratz served internship in the Office of the First Lady

Christine Kratz, a dual major in international affairs and tourism, spent spring semester at the White House doing advance work for First Lady Michelle Obama.

When I decided to participate in an internship in Washington, DC, through The Washington Center Program, I never imagined that I would be waking up every morning and commuting to the White House. I pictured myself making coffee for my boss, making hundreds of copies a day, and sitting in on a few meetings as everyone assumes the typical intern will do. However, the day that I received a phone call from the Office of First Lady Michelle Obama congratulating me on being offered a position in the First Lady's Scheduling and Advance Office, my life completely changed.

From mid-January until the end of May, my main responsibilities in the East Wing of the White House included receiving, sorting, and responding to every invitation that the First Lady received, helping plan and execute many of her local events, and assisting with many of the larger events that the White House held during my time there. While it was probably the most stressed that I have ever been in my entire life, the challenge made me work hard to benefit as much as possible from the experience. I loved the fact that even as one of the youngest interns in the White House, I had so much responsibility, and that I was trusted by so many people. I also firmly believe that my internship was as remarkable as it turned out to be because of the people that I worked with on a daily basis. The East Wing is full of some of the most dedicated and talented individuals I have ever met. They truly inspired me to work harder, do more than was asked of me, and to have the confidence to make a difference in such a prestigious environment.

In addition to my internship, I took one evening class, volunteered at a local soup kitchen, and participated in a number of The Washington Center's programs and activities. The combination of these things helped make my experience in Washington, DC, extremely meaningful and well-rounded. I learned about the different cultures of the locals and was able to give back to the community through volunteering, two things that were very important to me going into this experience.

During my time in Washington, DC, I became more confident, independent, and a stronger person. I now have a clear direction for my life after graduation; I will explore the field of event and travel planning. I honestly feel as though I can handle any job given to me in the future. The people of both The Washington Center and the White House encouraged me to go above and beyond what is expected. For that, I will be forever grateful. This internship was honestly the opportunity of a lifetime and certainly something I will never forget.

For Kate Shriver '09, Washington internship leads to a job

As an honors student in international affairs and political science, Kate Shriver '09 was a Washington Center Intern in fall 2008. Like Joelle Calcavecchia (see page 4), Shriver worked with the Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies (NESAS), a regional center affiliated with the National Defense University under the umbrella of the Department of Defense (visit the NESAS Center at <http://nesa-center.org/en>). Shriver is now an employee at NESAS and shares her experience below.



Kate Shriver, standing far right, with Yemen seminar group and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton

I graduated in May 2009 and was offered a job as a Program Planner at NESAC in the middle of July 2009. As a planner, I coordinate the necessary logistics for the seminars to take place — anything from setting up lodging and transportation contracts to working with officials in the Pentagon and State Department to facilitate sessions with key speakers from those agencies.

I recently completed work on a Yemen bi-lateral seminar which brought 39 Yemeni officials from 17 different ministries of the Yemen government for two weeks. During that time we met with Senator Bob Casey on Capitol Hill; visited the State Department, where we took a group photo with Secretary Clinton and had sessions with top State officials; held sessions at the Pentagon and participated in a wreath-laying ceremony at the 9/11 memorial; and traveled to CENTCOM headquarters in Tampa, FL, to meet with General David Petraeus and receive CENTCOM briefings.

My job has allowed me many interesting and exciting opportunities like the ones listed above. During the Yemen seminar, I met the Yemeni ambassador who attended the Tampa portion of the program and hosted a luncheon at his house. Not long after, I was able to have tea with him when I stopped by the embassy.

I am now beginning to explore graduate school possibilities; by working in this capacity for the past year, I have found that I would really like to earn my masters degree in Middle Eastern studies.

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