Monmouth College Communication Studies

COMM / PUBR 2015-16 -- Select Internship Descriptions

William Armonda - Sound Design Intern, Our Fair City, Chicago IL, Summer 2015.

This past summer I was an intern for David Rheinstrom who was a sound designer for the independent podcast *Our Fair City*. *Our Fair City* is podcast which calls back to radio dramas from many years ago, and is run by volunteer artists, writers, and sound designers. The story of Our Fair City is a collection of stories of several individuals who live in a post-apocalyptic totalitarian city run by a corporate organization named Hartlife; the cast included a wide variety of characters including the eccentric, if not completely insane scientist Dr. Herbert West, the clumsy but well-meaning human-mole hybrid Loamy, and the chivalrous yet idiotic waste field worker Neal Henderson. The opportunity had come to me through a friend and co-worker of my uncle who happened to know David, who didn't object to the possibility of having an intern for the summer. While working for Our Fair City, I was able to not only refine my skills is sound editing, but I was given a chance to observe the world of independent fine arts in Chicago. During my time as an intern for Our Fair City I worked primarily as David's sound design assistant, and on more than one occasion I was the one who even created the sound effects used for the audio drama. I also was able to sit in on several events for the company including a staff meeting and a read through of the upcoming season. Overall, I consider this internship a very informative and rewarding experience in my career as a student.

Amber Berge – PR/Event Planning, Quad Cities Convention & Visitors Center, Moline, IL Summer 2015

This summer, Amber Berge, Monmouth College senior, started her internship at the Quad Cities Convention and Visitors Bureau in Moline, IL. As a Public Relations major with an interest in events, Berge was excited to be able to continue her education into a real world situation. Throughout the internship she was tasked with a variety of tasks. She was responsible for overseeing the parking and shuttling of RABGRAI participants, which was a big event set to end in Davenport, IA at the end of the summer. Weekly she was also responsible to create and send out an email to all members of the QCCVB to alert them to upcoming events. She was also expected to create weekly social media posts and attend staff meetings to discuss business in the office. Along with those responsibilities she also helped others around the office with various projects including stuffing mailings, entering information into the database.

Rachel Bingham - Public Relations, Girl Scouts of America, Bloomington, IL, Summer 2015

Some goals I worked toward for the organization included developing a Speaker's Bureau, assisting with media planning, and developing extensive databases of information on organizations and companies for Girl Scouts of Central Illinois to contact. Some of my personal goals were to improve my own confidence to interact in a working environment, make connections with employees, and gain knowledge and experience for a long term goal to encourage a healthy lifestyle for young women. While Girl Scouts involves more than camping, cookies, and crafts there is a shared interest of encouraging people to get involved and be active. The objective not only of Girl Scouts but also parents, mentors, other service groups, and going to college is to have a positive influence in someone's life in order for that someone to create a life that can be the most satisfying and fulfilling. It was a blessing to help further the cause of Girl Scouts.

As a public relations and media relations intern, I was responsible for updating the team's website, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram accounts, on a daily basis. Typical daily updates included adding and updating player statistics, pictures, and bios. On the Social media accounts I was in charge of sending out news and information on individual players and the team. This also included writing articles and press releases informing various outlets of upcoming promotions and home stands. Immediately following all home games, I reported all scores to local media stations via press releases. When our primary public announcer was not with us I would take over his responsibility during home games. This internship taught me a lot about public relations on a smaller scale of professional sports. It also gave me the opportunity to create and establish relationships with co-workers, season ticket holders, and Frontier League executives.

Maggie Brundige - The Corporate Learning Institute, Wheaton, IL, Summer 2015.

Throughout the summer of 2015 I was hired as the Digital Marketing intern at The Corporate Learning Institute. The Corporate Learning Institute operates as a small, privately owned firm in Wheaton, IL. The Corporate Learning Institute assists other companies, groups, and individuals in developing their organizational abilities and evaluating what their needs are. Their main focuses are coaching, training, strategy, and team building. The goal of their services is to meet the client's needs and assist them in the development process. My main focus was Digital Marketing. I positively promoted the company and their services on all social media sites, sent out monthly eblasts, and designed an online marketing campaign. The company consists of five in-office staff members. Working with a small company, all of us had to assist one another in areas outside of our expertise. I found myself writing press releases, conducting guest blog interviews, taking pictures at events, organizing clients files, and often assisting my supervisor Dr. Susan Cain with general secretarial needs.

My supervisors allowed me to hold a lot of freedom. They put a lot of trust into my work and felt that they could count on me to meet my deadlines. I highly enjoyed not only developing my marketing skills, but also obtaining first-hand experience interacting with professional clients at events The Corporate Learning Institute instructed. This internship taught me professional skills, importance of stepping out of your comfort zone, and how to interact with different personalities in an office. After completing this internship I have obtained immense amounts of knowledge about marketing and office relations.

LaShawn Cargo – Marketing Intern- MedComp Sciences, Zachary, LA, Summer 2015.

This summer, I interned for a healthcare service facility called Medcomp Sciences in Zachary, LA as a marketing and client services intern. Medcomp Sciences specializes in urinary toxicology and services including DNA testing, and pharmaceutical medication compounding. During this time, I researched outside ventures to create additional revenue to our toxicology services with sports medicine drug testing. I was appointed to assist our pharmacy with all marketing and advertising opportunities. I would find myself creating press releases, marketing materials and starting our social media presences. Nevertheless, I worked hard to get our new products of fitness supplements and skin therapy cosmetics to consumers. Also, I assisted the client services department to implement structural job duties and create a database to keep track of all client information. I enjoyed my opportunity at this internship because I was given an administrative position and was able to create my own agenda with direct from the CEO and COO of the company. This internship has given me the opportunity to have a career after my final year of school and provided me with the perfect experience to handle the real world.

Korri Crawford - Prairie Radio Communications, Monmouth, Illinois. Spring 2016

For my internship at Prairie Radio Communications, I was able to focus mainly on sports radio. I've always been interested in anything to do with sports and this was a great opportunity to work with athletes, coaches, and the radio host getting the news out about it all. I worked on the internet to gain information about player's stats to help us choose our player of the week selections. I worked with recording equipment to record stories that Shawn had written about recent games and athlete stories. I also gained knowledge outside of sports when Shawn wasn't in or had a slow day. I was able to work with Logan on sound editing equipment and how to make commercials for clients. I also did some office work for people around the office who needed help. The best part about this internship was gaining more knowledge about sports radio, something I've been interested in since I was younger. I was lucky enough to work with some great people who were truly excited to teach me about their station and how to work with different equipment.

Kiersten Davison – Event Planning Intern, Alumni Office, Monmouth College, Monmouth, IL, Summer 2015

I interned at the Monmouth College Alumni Engagement Office from May 19 through August 6. My responsibilities varied depending on the event scheduled. I worked very closely with the alumni and faculty for the annual Golden Scots Celebration. Being the biggest project I worked on, I learned several different aspects of how to effectively connect, communicate, and work with others. My director emphasized how important it was to learn the follow-up process post-event. I did miscellaneous small jobs around the office such as filing paperwork and taking inventory. I think it's important to keep in mind the odd jobs that have to be done around an office as well. That is more of a real life experience because it is what someone will have to do while employed. Out of the 172 hours I worked this summer what I gained the most was the belief I now have in myself and mywork.

Jessica Fox - Retail Sales & Management Internship, The Buckle, Quincy, IL, Summer 2016

Fox's responsibilities included learning about all of the products, learning how to use a Sales Presentation Guide, learning how to present products to customers, and much more. As an intern, one of her personal projects included increasing the growth of the Oakley brand. She increased the store's ranking for women's Oakley sunglasses by nine places from July to August, and she increased the store's ranking for the men's Oakley sunglasses by 29 places from June to August. The Quincy Buckle is now ranked 7th for women's and 73rd for men's Oakley sunglasses out of over 400 other Buckle stores. One of the highlights of the internship was an all-expense paid two-day trip to the Intern Rally at The Buckle in the Coralridge Mall in Coralville, IA. There, Fox worked and learned alongside 15 other interns from her district and was able to speak one-on-one with the district manager about her future aspirations and her internship experience.

Curtis Galloway - Digital Journalism, Vital VOICE Magazine, St. Louis, MO, Summer 2015

This past June, Curtis Galloway was a writing intern at *Vital VOICE* Magazine. The Vital VOICE is an LGBT focused magazine that includes fashion and lifestyle focused around St. Louis and Kansas City. The Vital VOICE has current events on their website and more fashion and lifestyle in the actual print magazines. They also host many events throughout the city. Curtis started his internship at the beginning of June and completed it in the first weeks of August. During that time he took part in the production of events and day to day production of the magazine's materials. Curtis was tasked with writing two online articles a week while writing at least one story for the physical print magazine, but he ended up with multiple articles in the print magazines. Curtis had the opportunity to meet some very influential people around St. Louis, including, the director of Talent Plus, Directors of ArtsKC and the St. Louis RAC, Jim Obergefell, the named plaintiff on the marriage equality case, St. Louis Mayor Francis Slay,

Celina Gonzalez - Marketing/PR Intern, The Flipple Company, Galesburg, IL, Fall 2015

During my senior year, I gained experience by working with The Flipple Company. Gaining experience as a public relations and community relations intern, allowed me become responsible for updating the company's Facebook, prepare photos, brochures, website layouts, blogs, and answer to emails or phone calls on the company's behalf on a daily basis. I also worked with proofreading brochures, commercial skits, post, and putting together media kits. On a typical day, I would analyze the information I created and sent out. For example, on Facebook, I would analyze the pages data from the "Insights" tab to see how well statuses or information attracted new clients and individuals. When I would receive comments or messages, I made sure to reply and answer any questions needed. My favorite part of the internship was writing to bloggers and talking potential clients. This internship not only taught me a lot about public relations with a business, but it also gave me the opportunity to create networking opportunities with buyers and individuals by just talking about the Flipple at trade shows and hearing about their own experience in the public relations and business world.

Julianna Graff - Human Resources /Training Intern, Nascote Industries, Nashville, IL, Summer 2015

As the Human Resources Training Intern at Nascote Industries, my main responsibility over the summer involved creating a new electronic training file cabinet to streamline onboarding and improve current processes. The electronic file cabinet houses all important training, policy, and forms that supervisors need to do their jobs well. Training supervisors can be very overwhelming with all the information they are told in the first days of onboarding. This file cabinet will be located as a document in EtQ that they can reference at any time. With every piece of information being linked and categorized, new supervisors can easily navigate through Nascote's systems. Currently this information is located all across the various drives and document systems. By organizing links in one file, supervisors will be able to find information more efficiently. Nascote Industries stresses the importance of continuous improvement. My internship reflected this standard as I created training for new processes, such as the online safety incident reports using Maximo. While many employees are familiar with the Maximo system, using this program to complete this form will create a more efficient process for supervisors and the safety department. My internship also consisted of several smaller projects, such as writing video and training scripts, compiling newsletter templates and writing stories for the Fairness Committee's newsletter, The Yodeler, writing articles for the corporate office in Troy, Michigan, and scheduling interviews for new hires.

Amirah Hall - Administrative Intern, KIPP Create (schools), Chicago, IL, Summer 2015

This summer I did my Internship with KIPP Create. KIPP stands for Knowledge is Power Program I learned about KIPP because, I went to KIPP Ascend for middle school and this is one of the schools that formed from my middle school. I wanted to Intern with KIPP because I worked with them in the pass and I enjoyed the environment that I worked in. This summer I had the opportunity to go out and recruit students for KIPP Create. What I would do is go to different neighborhoods or go to different events and talk to families about what KIPP was and how it was a great opportunity for students to be successful in school. At KIPP we have this song called "Read Baby Read" in the song it talks about how "the more you read, the more you grow and the more you grow the more you know" which, is just saying how KIPPster (the name we call students who are a part of the KIPP family) grow because, of the education the school provides for them. In my Internship I found things through this experiences that worked for me and things that did not. Overall I enjoyed being a part of the KIPP family as a staff member.

Cole Jackson – Law Enforcement Intern, Bloomington Police Department, Bloomington, IL, Summer 2015

This past summer I interned at Bloomington Police Department, in Bloomington, IL where I did my internship and did first hand ride along with police officers. I had the chance to ride with many different officers who were very helpful in showing and teaching me first hand work of being a police officer. These officers had many roles and job descriptions. Some officers were patrol officers, sex offender officers, K9 officers and more. While interning at the Bloomington Police Department I got to see firsthand what these officers go through every day and the dangers they face of being a law officer I quickly learned that this is a very dangerous job and every move the officer makes they need to be cautious with the person/suspect they are talking too. At any minute someone could decide to injure or cause harm to the officer. I mostly rode in ride along and also saw what was going on in the west side of Bloomington, IL. The west side of Bloomington is the rougher part of Bloomington and was where the most crime occurs. I also had days where I helped the sex offender officer look for sex offenders, murders and passed out information cards to neighbors of the Bloomington community. I also had the opportunity to go out to calls at people's homes and see the officer's talk to families or family members who called for the officers to their home being able to interact with people is the main thing in police work. If you can't communicate with people then police work is a very hard thing to do. All the different work and first-hand experience I got from the Bloomington Police Officers truly made my summer internship experience a great one.

Rachel Masch – Website Design Intern, City Hall, Monmouth, IL, Spring 2016

This spring I interned at City Hall, where I developed a website for the Monmouth PUSH Chapter and learned the basics of Joomla 3+ administration and how to set up and configure a Joomla website and modules. The Monmouth PUSH chapter is currently pursuing initiatives such as constructing this comprehensive civic website of food resources and related organizations and opportunities in our community, in Illinois, and globally. The chapter is also working on a range of student, faculty, staff, and citizen engagement opportunities that will be updated on the website. I learned the basics of Joomla 3+ administration and how to set up and configure a Joomla website and modules. I was also tasked with coming up with content as well as organizing the content that went on the website. I enjoyed the challenge with coming up with content and organizing it on the website. I was challenged often because I had to think for myself in the internship which boosted my confidence in my technology skills. I learned that there is a lot more to making a website than just creating the menus themselves. I had to make sure menus had a category and that articles were connected to both the category and menu. I was happy to know that the skills I had before the internship evolved into something that I can take with me in order to further my technical communication skills. Using the experiences, I have gained from this internship, I now have learned how to organize and deliver meaningful content to an identified audience, gained deeper experience in web technology, and was able to understand website development process from start to finish. I learned how to make judgment on what to include and not include, which gave me better confidence in myself and in technology. The experiences were great and definitely prepared me for a job.

Dylan Miller -- Marketing Intern, Warren Achievement Center, Monmouth, IL. Spring 2016

During the 2016 spring semester I had the opportunity to intern for Warren Achievement Center (WAC). During this internship I shadowed Marketing Coordinator Sean Cavanaugh. Since WAC is the public transportation provider for Warren County, my main responsibility for this internship was to manage an advertising sales program in which I sold advertising on the Warren County Public Transportation vans. Managing this program broadened my communication skillset to an extremely high level. It help me master public speaking, face-to-face communication, and writing skills as well. This internship taught me many other things that will help me immensely when I engage in the professional world. It was an amazing experience with a great organization and I feel one-hundred percent ready to take on life after graduation.

Spring semester of my senior year at Monmouth College I had an eye-opening experience as an intern for the Mary Davis Detention Home. Mary Davis is a facility in Knox County that houses juveniles through the Department of Corrections who have found themselves in trouble with the law. The mission of the Mary Davis Detention Home is to maintain a safe and secure environment and to create a positive impact on all residents through programming that will promote change and self-worth. As an intern I supervised various parts of their day. Such supervision included recreational activity time when the clients were allowed time out of their cells. When out of their cell they might shoot baskets in the gym, play cards or ping pong or interact with peers. It was my job to make sure that rules were followed and that there were no fights. If the clients wanted to talk, I would try to counsel and mentor them. Education continues for the residents while at Mary Davis Detention Home, and I would also help out in the classroom if they needed help with homework or had any other questions. I would also supervise mealtime and do time checks while they were in their cells. This was especially important for those clients who were on suicide watch. At the end of the day I would help grade each client based on their behavior during the day. When a juvenile was arrested I would go along to pick them up at the police station and bring them to the Mary Davis Detention Home and help with the intake process for admitting them to stay at the facility. My favorite part of the internship was interacting with the clients; building relationships and helping them want to change in positive ways. This experience gave me the opportunity to work on my communication skills. It also helped me learn to be more comfortable while outside of my comfort zone. This internship showed me that working with troubled youth is what I hope to do after I graduate.

Carter Neal – Broadcast Intern, Prairie Radio Communications, Monmouth, IL, Summer 2015.

Prairie Radio Communications in Monmouth consists of three local radio stations including Sunny 97.7 WMOI, 1330 WRAM, and 1590 WAIK. I spent the summer learning about the production what happens behind the scenes of a typical day in radio along with the different responsibilities that people must have within the studios to keep things running smoothly. I created daily newscasts for the three stations. My responsibility was to cut together sound bites from the morning show interviews that could be used when reading the newscasts and then put together a news story cut based around these sound bites. After I cut together and edit news stories for future newscasts using Adobe Audition, I moved into reading the news stories of the day. With a Galesburg station and two Monmouth based stations, my focus was to gather news stories that had a local focus for the two newscasts and also consisted of news that civilians needed to hear. Along with newscasts, I also read obituaries for the WRAM and WAIK studios for the noon broadcast. I also operated the sound board at the station as we did live shows from different remote events. The internship was a great experience, as I was able to combine skills that I had learned during my time at Monmouth College into real-life career skills that will be valuable in the future. This internship furthered my interest in a career in radio communications as I wish to pursue a career in radio much further after this experience.

Mackenzie Notestein -- Public Relations, Old Threshers Foundation. Mount Pleasant, IA, Summer 2015

My responsibilities included writing articles for the Old Threshers' newsletter, creating brochures about the Foundation and a program called School Tours. Another task I accomplished was redesigning an informational kiosk about the Foundation. The internship began on May 18th, and ended August 14th. Upon her return, she plans on getting some real world job experience and having a clear idea of a career path that she wants to continue.

Katy Rees - Marketing Intern., ENFOS, Inc. Naperville, Il., Summer 2015.

This summer I interned at ENFOS, Inc. in Naperville, IL, where I gained experience in field sales, inside sales, inbound marketing, marketing research, and social media. ENFOS is a web-based software solution that helps large companies organize their environmental cleanups on contaminated property. Although environmental liabilities and high-tech software are not my forte, I was challenged to explore a new field and it pushed me to reach new heights, especially in my research skills. Through research of prospective clients, blog and press release writing, webinar planning, team-based campaigns, and much more, I furthered my education in the field of public relations and marketing. I learned more than I could have ever imagined in my time at ENFOS and I am excited to see where these skills take me in the future.

Brittany Shumaker- Greek Life intern, Monmouth College, Monmouth, IL, Spring 2015

This spring I had the privilege as working at the Fraternity and Sorority life intern at Monmouth College with Billy Bernard. I spent the semester working closely with him planning events such as an All Greek Easter egg hunt, and an All Greek cookout and getting events ready such as the Greek Week banquet. During my experience I conducted interviews with faculty members in the student affairs field. Those faculty members were John Salazar, Jim Fry, Karen Orogzalek and Dean Condon. These interviews truly gave me the perspective of all aspects of the student affairs field. I also got to work closely with members of Fraternity and Sorority life. I worked with the VP of programming and social chairs in planning events such as the egg hunt and the cookout. I also planned meetings with an agenda to have a set plan as to what to talk about, and give all the chapters a chance to relay what is happening inside their own chapters. These meetings were designed to bring those positions together so they had face to face communication leading them to have better events.

Jaire Sims - Website Design Intern:, City Hall, Monmouth, IL, Spring 2016

For my internship, I worked with Paul Schuytema who works at Monmouth City Hall as a community director. Over the course of five months, I was assigned to build a new website for the city of Monmouth using a program called Joomla. The goal was to give the previous Monmouth city website a new look while keeping most of the content that was previously published. After Paul purchased a new layout that I selected, I frequently transfer content from the old Monmouth city website to the new one. During my internship, Mr. Schuytema helped me learn the process of editing web content. At first the process was a little daunting because I had no experience of building a website. But through Mr. Schuytema's guidance and several tutorial videos that I found on YouTube, the process of building a website gradually became doable for me. In the end, I was able to achieve the goal of building a new and functional website for the city of Monmouth.

David Stewart - Warren County United Way, Monmouth, IL, Fall 2014

This fall while I worked for the Warren County United Way, I had the privilege to intern for an expert in community relations, Sean Cavanaugh. My everyday tasks were going around the town of Monmouth visiting different businesses that have donated to the United Way in the past. Trying to achieve an overall campaign goal of \$195,000 in the small community of Monmouth is a difficult task. Following Sean around every day made it clear that to raise an amount of money such as this campaign; you really have to have strong relationships with business owners and powerful people in the county that you're campaigning in. When you build these relationships with these important community figures, they can have an impact on other citizens that could potentially help donate to your cause. Helping in a fundraising campaign was a new exciting learning experience that taught me the different steps you must take to run a successful campaign.

David Stewart - Warren Achievement Center, Monmouth, IL, Spring 2015

I completed a second internship experience, again with Sean Cavanaugh. I met new influential members in the community at business and lunch meetings. Warren Achievement Center hired Sean this year to update the marketing side of the company, so I was on the ground level of this new project seeing all the projects that go into updating a company's image. New company logo was interesting because it took several weeks and dozens of different ideas before we narrowed it down to just one. We also created a series of videos that helped explain what we do as a company, hiring videos, show are buildings and technology, and several other marketing videos that are still in the process of making when I left. Sean gave me the project of getting the advertising set up for future interns. This took many hours in which I took picture and measurements of all the transportation vans we own. Then once we had this I was to get in contact with a local sign distributor. This was difficult because it was hard to get in contact and took several weeks before we came in contact. After we found out his prices, Sean and I came up with prices for how much we would charge if a business wanted to advertise with us. We accomplished everything and even had 3 local businesses purchase over 600 dollars of advertisement.

Danielle Stuckey- Grant Research Intern, Discovery Depot Children's Museum, Galesburg, IL, Spring 2015

During the school year of 2015-1016 I had the pleasure of interning at the Discover Depot Children's Museum under Denise Bradburn, Executive Director. The Discovery Depot Children's Museum is a place that offers a wide range of activities and exhibits that promote critical thinking and hands-on learning. While interning for Discovery Depot I completed grant research, updated the Chamber of Commerce calendar for the Macomb community, and I had the task of helping out with the auction at the museum's annual fundraiser, Festival of Lights.

Frankie Thomas – Wellness/PR Intern, Trotter Wellness Center, Monmouth College, Spring 2016

For my public relations and communication internship, I was responsible for a multitude of tasks. Some of these included keeping our social media sites updated, creating and implementing new staff and student programs, being able to think strategically about an approach to influencer outreach and generate an outreach strategy for outreach programs, and etc... This internship not only taught me about public relations within campus life, but also enhanced my communication skills by allowing me to use both my persuasive and argumentative skills to get students and staff to come out and participate in my events. It also gave me the opportunity to work closely with the staff of Monmouth College in order to improve my networking skills and opportunities.

Yahaira Torres -- The Office of Student Involvement, Monmouth College, 2015-2016

This fall, I had the privilege of working with the Monmouth College Office of Student Involvement with William Bernard. I spent the entire 2015- 2016 school year helping William coordinate events and meetings, organize The Office of Student Involvement, help continue market the office and run small errands like answer phone calls, mail letters, etc. Through my experience at The Office of Student Involvement, I was able to learn the day-to-day basis type of work produced in an office. For example, learning how to coordinate an event from scratch. In addition, I had the great experience learning how student development works at a small liberal arts college. I worked coordinating a New Member Greek Retreat welcoming new members into the Greek community. I also had to coordinate a New Officer Retreat to welcome new officers from the Fraternity and Sorority Life community into their position and explain to them the difficulties in taking on a role and position within an organization. I dealt with a lot of creative thinking and pass communication resources about small group organization. In addition, in order to continue to market the Office of Student Involvement I had written down samples of ideas to post on the Facebook page and evaluate the marketing and advertisement of The Office of Student Involvement. My experience with the Office of Student Involvement was a great one.

Jill Turley - Public Relations Intern, Greenville Chamber of Commerce, Greenville, IL Summer 2016

Over the course of the summer, Turley was kept quite busy. Her responsibilities included assisting Goldsmith in ad design, press releases, and promotion for events including the Greenville Graffiti Car Show, The Munster's Ball, and the Greenville Bicentennial among others. Turley was also put in charge of promoting the Richard W. Bock Sculpture Museum with the guidance of Goldsmith and the museum's curator Sharon Grimes. This team started off the summer by touring the museum and deciding that the group they wanted to see more from were high school and college students. She focused on getting the interest of local high schools and universities by crafting letters designed to grab their attention and persuade them to bring art students on a visit. During her time at the internship, Turley made dozens of new connections and valuable experiences.