Internships paved the way for history alumna’s career path

Jen Vos, a 2012 history graduate, considers her senior year at Calvin as crucial to providing experiences that led her to where she is today. Jen spent the fall semester in Budapest, Hungary, soaking up the culture and history of Central and Eastern Europe, while also developing her interest and skills in photography. Upon returning from Budapest, Jen was a collections intern at the Grand Rapids Public Museum, conducting research in the archives and cataloging artifacts into the museum’s database.

These two experiences prepared Jen to secure a spot in the Padnos Internship Program at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum upon graduation from Calvin. She was immediately put to work on a new and ambitious project: to produce professional quality photographs of the entire collection of 19,000 artifacts. Due to the scope of the project, Jen was asked to continue her internship into the fall of 2012.

While Jen’s supervisor at the Ford Museum worked on a proposal to fund a full-time position photographing artifacts, Jen continued working on the project during a two-month temp period in the spring of 2013. She spent the rest of 2013 working at the Grand Rapids Public Museum, first as the assistant manager of the gift shop at the Titanic exhibit, and then as a front desk customer service associate.

In December of 2013, Jen learned that the Gerald R. Ford Foundation agreed to fund a full-time Digital Technician position for 2014. Jen accepted the offer, and in early January, returned to her post and started her current position as Digital Technician at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum. Jen enjoys the opportunity to photograph artifacts and edit the photos for promotional use.

“Without a doubt, my favorite part about my job is being able to handle artifacts. It is quite literally a hands-on approach to history,” Jen explains. “I can read an online article about the Doolittle raid on Tokyo in 1942, and then walk into collections storage to see Doolittle’s Medal of Honor, which is on loan for an upcoming exhibit. Physical artifacts give context and evidence to the past in a very concrete way. It is an honor and a privilege to help preserve these artifacts for future generations.”

Reflecting on her career path so far, Jen recognizes that her internship at the Grand Rapids Public Museum helped secure her internship with the Ford Museum, which in turn, helped secure her current position. As a result of this experience, she recommends that Calvin students pursue an internship as soon as possible.

“Internships are the best way to gain experience and to test interest and aptitude in a particular field,” says Jen. “Also, pay attention to the daily routine of your supervisor. Intern tasks can seem dull at times, but you won’t be an intern forever. If you pursue the field in which you intern, your daily tasks will more closely resemble that of your supervisor than your internship.”
Over 275 Calvin students completed a fall internship, giving them the opportunity to develop the professional skills employers are seeking in candidates.

*Students: report your internship at www.calvin.edu/career for a chance to win $15 to the Campus Store!*

Additional internship photos are featured on our Facebook page.

Carlie - Skytron  
Nick - Cascade Country Club  
Evelyn - Kentwood Community Church  
Joe - World Renew  
David - Monroe Products  
Laurel - HR Collaborative  
Nate - Micah Center  
Victoria - Catholic Central Schools
Fall semester highlights

In addition to providing one-on-one career counseling, delivering presentations to numerous classes and student groups, and managing the internship program, the Career Development office held a variety of events during the fall semester:

- The annual Business Careers Networking Reception was held in October, and 175 students and professionals participated in “speed networking” conversations at the event.

- The Career Development and Alumni offices partnered together to coordinate the third annual Calvin in Chicago Career Fair, held on October 28 at the University Club in downtown Chicago. 82 Calvin students made the trip to meet with representatives from 16 employers, including Goldman Sachs, Federal Reserve Bank, Symmetri Marketing Group, among others.

- The Fall Career Fair, hosted by GVSU in collaboration with Calvin and other area colleges, included 217 employers recruiting for internships and full-time positions in a variety of industries. 109 Calvin students took advantage of this opportunity to connect with prospective employers (compared to 64 Calvin students who attended last year).

- The Career Development office, in partnership with Michigan State University and Dr. Phil Gardner, Director of the Collegiate Employment Research Institute, hosted the annual Recruiting Trends Conference at Calvin. Calvin has become a regional site for the national conference in the future.

Upcoming events

**Michigan’s Global Future: Career Conference for International Students**
Fri., Feb. 6
GVSU Downtown Grand Rapids Campus

**Calvin College Engineering & Computing Fair**
Tues., Feb. 10, 2:00-5:00 p.m.
Prince Conference Center

**Job Pursuit**
Fri., Feb. 13, 9:00 am-4:00 p.m.
Crowne Plaza Lansing West Hotel—Lansing, MI
Pre-registration required

**Winter Career Fair & Health Careers Day**
Tues., Feb. 24, 1:00-5:00 p.m.
DeVos Place Convention Center

**Out-of-State Teacher Fair**
Mon., March 2, 3:30-6:30 p.m.
GVSU Allendale Campus—Kirkhof Center
Follow-up interviews on March 3

**Teacher Search**
Tues., April 28, 12:00-4:00 p.m.
Prince Conference Center

More details about these events are available at www.calvin.edu/events-list.html
We offer a variety of services for students and alumni:
- Career counseling
- Major selection
- Career testing
- Internships
- Job search assistance
- Job fairs
- Practice interviews
- Resume and cover letter critiques
- Web-based job posting system

Career Development Staff

Glenn Triezenberg, Director
Bonnie Speyers, Career Counselor
Meredith Segur, Career Counselor
Lydia Frens, Career Counselor
Beth Cok, Internship Program Manager
Karen Brewer, Department Assistant
Laurie Lemmen, Internship Program Coordinator
Kristy Dykhouse, Recruitment Coordinator

Questions or suggestions? Call or e-mail
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