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Summer internships offer new experiences

Most students return from summer vacation sunburned and tired, having spent their days chasing around little kids at a summer camp or slaving away in a retail job. Some students, however, were lucky enough to have participated in slightly more "grown-up" endeavors, spending their time with exciting internships in a variety of professions.

Students found out about these internships in several different ways, including social connections, family members, and the Career Resource Center's (CRC) website. Alex Wynn '07, for example, first heard about his internship through his father. He then applied and interviewed for the position.

Wynn interned at the Labor Bureau of the New York State Attorney's Office. Even though he had no legal training, Wynn was eventually able to attend client meetings, take affidavits and depositions, and even write legal documents that were later submitted to court. One of the most valuable parts of his internship, Wynn said, was being able to represent the public, rather than private lawyers who only represents their specific clients.

By becoming active participants of actual companies, interns gained practical experience and also more widely-applicable life lessons.

While interning at the International Herald Tribune, an international newspaper based in Paris, France, Emily Greenhouse '08 researched for the special reports section, helped to compile the paper's library database and helped to communicate between locations in Paris, Hong Kong, Tokyo, and Seoul. Greenhouse even had the honor to represent the International Herald Tribune at a press conference.

"Getting to be the first person to print out the European, Parisian, and/or Tokyo [paper] was quite a thrill," Greenhouse said.

The most helpful part of his internship, said Eugene Dayanghirang '07, was making sure that he wanted to enter the financial industry after college. While interning with a start-up financial company, Dayanghirang gained experience through attending meetings, constructing models, doing research, and participating in conference calls.

Sophie Pollitt-Cohen '09 had an internship with the Bronx Defenders, a public defenders' office in the South Bronx. Pollitt-Cohen found one of the most interesting parts of her internship to be when she visited a client at Rikers Island jail, and witnessed a heart-felt visit between a female prisoner and her boyfriend.

"Seeing things like that really makes you put things in perspective and makes you reconsider a lot of what you hold to be important or necessary in your life," Pollitt-Cohen said.

Even if these students do not plan to enter into these specific fields after graduation, they have still gained valuable experience for future jobs.

"I did learn a lot, and I think that's more important than getting an 'in' in a field," Pollitt-Cohen said. "I learned about a part of the world I knew nothing about, and interacted with people, like the girl I visited at Riker's, that I never would have met."