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LEADING AND LEARNING BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Though the Gerstacker Institute may be best known for its honors-level economics and management courses and prestigious internship placements, less well-publicized are the many opportunities that exist for Institute members to gain important leadership and service skills. Gerstacker students develop strong leadership skills by networking

with successful alumni and community leaders. And by extending their passion and dedication outside the classroom, Gerstacker students also make some amazing community service contributions. Read on to hear about their recent learning adventures.

REPAIRING HOMES (AND LIVES)

By Mark Stevenson, '12

During Albion's winter break, 35 student volunteers spent 16 days doing hurricane relief in New Orleans. When I signed up for this trip I only knew two or three people, but as soon as the vans pulled away from Albion's campus, I was making new friends. We all came together with a common goal: to help those who had experienced a tragedy.

Living in Michigan I know of hard times, or so I thought. Unfortunately, each day as we drove to our work site, I noticed that although it had been over three years since Hurricane Katrina devastated the area, many people were still without homes and jobs.

The events of this trip, coupled with what I have learned through the Gerstacker Institute, have led me to a greater understanding of how much a disaster such as Katrina can impact an economy. This volunteer experience has been one that will aid me in future endeavors both in school and career.



Mark Stevenson and fellow Gerstacker students Shawn Wismer, Tyrone Gadson, and Billy Sweeter hang drywall during their hurricane relief trip to New Orleans.

LEADERSHIP IN CHANGING TIMES

"Leadership in a Changing World" is the theme for the first annual Slight Leadership Fellows Program, which started with a "Leadership Week" retreat in January. Fourteen sophomore students nominated by Albion's Institute directors and faculty from across campus were invited to participate, among them six Gerstacker Institute students. They began an intensive leadership skills enhancement experience that will continue during subsequent semesters. While the program emphasizes personal skill development, its benefits reach beyond the participants as Slight Fellows share their skills with their peers, in and out of the classroom.

Led by Mike Frandsen, director of the Gerstacker Institute, and Al Pheley, director of the Ford Institute, the weeklong program featured classes, workshops, invited speakers, and leadership activities. Participants were assigned to small groups for the week, with each group presenting a capstone project on the final day. Gerstacker sophomore Sumedha Makker said of the event: "It was a really great experience! I got to meet people that I never would have otherwise, and had

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Small-group projects on topics ranging from energy to government regulation to education led to in-depth presentations on the final day of the leadership workshop.

Leadership in Changing Times *(continued from p.1)*

the opportunity to hear some incredibly inspirational and successful speakers which included some Albion alumni.”

Leadership workgroup topics included: energy, free markets vs. regulation (and/or nationalization), education, health care, and government. Guest speakers included: Joe Schwarz, former U.S. Congressman, delivering the keynote address on “Leadership in Challenging Times”; Jim Hettinger, former chief executive officer, Battle Creek Unlimited; Rick Simonson, ’72, legislative and political consultant; Dennis Moore, ’70, public affairs officer, Canadian Consulate; Moose Scheib, ’02, chief executive officer, LoanMod.com; Randy Richardville, ’81, Michigan state senator; and Lana Pollock, former president, Michigan Environmental Council.

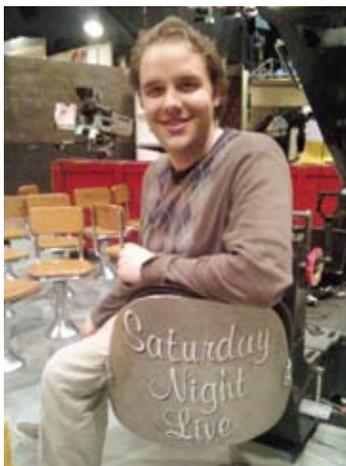
SNL: LIVE AT STUDIO 8-H

Christoph Tallerico, ’10

I was lucky enough to spend fall 2008 in New York City as an intern for NBC’s “Saturday Night Live” (SNL).

My internship experience was made possible thanks to the New York Arts Program (NYAP), which places students in internships all around New York City. The NYAP director put me in touch with Lenny Pickett, SNL’s music director, who was looking for interns. An interview was set up for me with Pickett in May, and before I knew it I was flying back to the Big Apple in August to start work.

During my internship, I worked for SNL’s Music Department. My duties included backing up music from past shows, researching upcoming acts, and helping my supervisor manage each week’s musical guests and their entourage. I spent every week at Studio 8-H and got to see firsthand all of the different departments working together to put on a live 90-minute show. It was an incredible semester, and an experience I will never forget.



Christoph Tallerico

SPEAKING OF SPORTS

Samantha Shaffer, ’10

As a huge sports fan, I hoped to combine this passion of mine with an internship in sports management. My internship with the director of men’s basketball operations at Michigan State University made this possible. Working with one of the most prestigious basketball programs in the country was a tremendous opportunity.

During the internship, I helped create the Frances Cleaves Family Center, a place where the families of players could “hang



Samantha Shaffer

out” after a game while waiting for their student to come out of the locker room. I assisted in all aspects of setting up the center from hiring contractors to making sure everything was completed in a timely manner. The center opened near the end of my internship, and I was really proud I had been a part of it.

I also worked with Camouflage Kids, a non-profit organization that supports children whose parents are serving in the military by providing tickets to college athletic events. At MSU, the kids attended a basketball game, met Coach Tom Izzo, and were present on the court for the national anthem. I helped ensure that the event ran smoothly. There were 250 children who attended with their families. Seeing their faces when they got to meet Coach Izzo was one of the best feelings ever.

DIVING INTO MARKET RESEARCH

Anastasia Bibicoff, ’10

During my fall 2008 internship with the market research firm J.D. Power and Associates, I worked on industry update reports for three market segments: commercial vehicles, marine, and motorcycle.

I reported on online coverage of new model launches, technology updates, financials, sales figures, and organizational changes pertaining to the whole market as well as our individual clients. At my department’s biweekly meetings, I then presented an overview of my findings and took questions. These assignments were a great way for me to develop my research and presentation skills. I also verified data and assisted in the preparation of market research reports.

This internship experience has taught me a lot about myself, as well as how I can contribute to a company. At J.D. Power, each manager I worked with took the time to explain to me how the task I was given contributed to the overall goal we were all trying to reach. I now have a clearer idea of what I hope to accomplish in the future.



Anastasia Bibicoff

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Admission to the Gerstacker Institute is selective. We are looking for good students—our average high school GPA is 3.6, and our average ACT is 26. Successful applicants also demonstrate leadership, express awareness of, and curiosity about, their world, and possess a “can do” attitude that is evident across a wide variety of endeavors. You’ll find the Institute application form online at: www.albion.edu/gerstacker/.

To learn more about the Gerstacker Institute, or to schedule a personal visit, contact:

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