Career Preparation Through Internships

"Experiencing individual patient's struggles helps her understand their needs and increase her empathy and compassion for others."

Rochelle Schimmele, a junior majoring in Social Work and Political Science, is currently an intern for the Minnesota State Office of the Ombudsman for Mental Health and Mental Retardation. Rochelle, a New Ulm native, is interested in governmental practice and policy and how they affect individual clients. Dr. Christine Black-Hughes’ contacts with the State Ombudsman Office helped Rochelle obtain the perfect internship for her interests and talents. The State Ombudsman office reviews policy and procedures to assure mental health agencies are using best practices, reviews individual client concerns, and investigates reports of serious injury or death in a mental health institution. Rochelle spent the first half of her internship working in the State office in St. Paul and the second half of her internship working with Craig Hill, Region 9 Ombudsman Officer, at the St. Peter Regional Treatment Center.

Rochelle said her education and her life experience prepared her for this internship in several ways. Rochelle’s education at MSU taught her listening skills, how to work as a team member, and the ability to communicate comfortably with many different people. The Social Work faculty also taught her how to advocate for herself. She was taught, “If you cannot advocate for yourself, how can you advocate for others?” Rochelle’s life experiences, including parents who were great role models, taught her the importance of community involvement and the importance of working with others.

When considering her career Rochelle’s main interest has been policy and practice; since completing her internship she realizes that she would like to start her career as a patient advocate. Rochelle believes that experiencing individual patient’s struggles will help her understand their needs and increase her empathy and compassion for others. Helping to develop mental health policy and practice is still her ultimate career goal.

– Denise Thompson

Social and Behavioral Sciences students are regularly placed in over 270 internship sites around the state. (See related story on page 3.) This year 239 undergraduate students and 49 graduate students broadened their educational experience by completing an internship or practicum.
Greetings from the Dean

Dear Friends:

I was recently asked to speak at the Foundation Board meeting on “Quality Education at Minnesota State” and to focus on typical activities in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences to illustrate the university’s strengths. As I did so, I was struck by how important the support of alumni and friends is to our success.

With the rest of the university, the college shares a primary commitment to student learning. We have worked hard to provide programs that will prepare students for their future careers, their personal lives, and their civic responsibilities. We put a special emphasis on applied, professional learning. Internships, learn-by-doing projects, and service learning assignments provide opportunities for students to put into practice in professional settings what they have learned in the classroom. In many cases alumni who work in agencies, organizations, and schools across Minnesota supervise these opportunities; this is a wonderful way of giving back to the university. In one case a donor has funded an internship in Washington, D.C., making possible another unique internship experience.

In the college as well as across the university are many outstanding faculty members who have been recognized as exemplary teachers, fine scholars, and contributors to their communities. In this past year, the college Advisory Board honored James Robertson, Corrections, as 2001 Distinguished Professor. You can read about other outstanding teachers on our website: www2.mnsu.edu/csocbeh/Faculty/spr2002teacher.html. Yueh-Ting Lee, Ethnic Studies, gave the college 23rd annual Frontier Forum Lecture this year. Outstanding Advising Awards went to Doran Hunter, Political Science, Bill Bernhagen, Urban and Regional Studies, Jackie Viecelli, Political Science, and Mike Scullin, Anthropology. These and other faculty members whom you remember have contributed so much to student lives! We thank all of you who have given memorials recently in honor of Professors Ken Good and Mohammed Askalani; those gifts will also contribute to enhancing education at MSU.

Finally, Minnesota State has always been an active participant in its communities. Last year was no exception. Through a series of brown-bag lunches the Kessel Peace Institute helped the community and campus deal with Sept. 11. Through events like the Asian American conference, the wider community learned about diversity in our nation and world. Though many community service events our students and their clubs reached out to make our region a better place in which to live. Several of our scholarships, such as the Truman and Reta Wood Community Leadership Scholarship, recognize and encourage student service.

In many ways your friendship and encouragement of our activities help us to continue the tradition of excellence in academic programs, faculty achievements, and community outreach that characterizes MSU. We are deeply grateful.

Susan Goldtrap-McClain

IN TOUCH

Volume 6, Issue 2, Spring 2002

Editor: Denise Thompson,
Assistant to the Dean, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

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IN Touch is distributed without charge to alumni, faculty, and friends to keep them informed of alumni activities and developments in the college.

After September 1, 2002, you can find IN Touch on the WWW by using http://www2.mnsu.edu/csocbeh/intouch.htm

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Internships in Brief

Anthropology
Two Anthropology students completed an exciting internship this spring: the analysis of Yanomami artifacts. The Yanomamo are a semi-nomadic people of the Brazil-Venezuela rainforest. The Yanomamo artifacts were donated to the Department of Anthropology and to the St. Peter Treaty Site History Center Museum by famous Anthropologist, Napoleon Chagnon. The Anthropology Dept. and Treaty Site Museum are collaborating on the cataloging and sale of these artifacts to collectors and museums. Money raised will go towards a “Napoleon Chagnon Scholarship.” The MSU students, photographing and cataloging the artifacts, have learned and practiced techniques of curation of a collection. The collection can soon be seen in the MSU EMuseum at http://emuseum.mnsu.edu/

Ethnic Studies
The Department of Ethnic Studies has just implemented an internship program. Recently several undergraduate students successfully completed their internships and received very positive comments from their internship supervisors. Samples of Ethnic Studies internship sites include the Region Development Commission, Senator Paul Wellstone’s office, and the Jeffers Petroglyph Museum.

Geography
Two of the numerous Department of Geography internship sites are the MSU Water Resources Center, and the National Flood Forecasting Center. The MSU Water Resources Center deals with mapping minor watersheds within the Minnesota River Basin under the auspices of minimizing non-point runoff. The National Flood Forecasting Center addresses forecasting flood potential within the Minnesota River and its associated tributaries. Both of these internships employ cartography and GIS capabilities.

Political Science/Law Enforcement
The Department of Political Science/Law Enforcement supports students in a variety of internship experiences throughout the state, the nation, and the world. Internship sites have been as close as the Mankato Department of Public Safety and as far as a United Nations office abroad. Most internship experiences are located by the student with the help of department faculty. Students keep journals, write critiques and do other assignments based on their internship, and the internship provider evaluation is an evaluation. It is not uncommon for internships to result directly or indirectly in positions upon graduation.

Industrial/Organizational Psychology
Students in the Industrial/Organizational Psychology Program complete a three-month internship. Students typically take internships in either management consulting or human resources. Over the last three years, MSU students have served as interns for American Express, Gantz-Wiley Research, Data Recognition Corp., Minnesota DNR, Corporation for National Service, Data Solutions, Army Research Institute, 3M, Medtronic, Midwest Wireless, ePredicts, Chiquita, and the Minnesota Twins.

Social Studies
This year thirty-six students participated in a new thirty-hour clinical experience, presenting lessons that fit the curriculum of the class they were teaching and Minnesota Board of Teaching standards. Students were guided and evaluated by their cooperating teacher in the school and received feedback from their secondary students. Social Studies students assessed their own performance and reflected on their experience, and on what they learned from the feedback.

Sociology and Corrections
Shannon Derner, interning at Counseling Services of Southern Minnesota, St. Peter, said, “An internship is an opportunity to apply what is learned in college, as well as to gain experience and knowledge providing genuine assistance or services to individuals.”

Michelle Scheffel, interning for the Department of Corrections in Albert Lea said, “I wanted the best experience I could get through my internship and I think working with the State is the place to get it.”

Women’s Studies
The Department of Women’s Studies is very pleased with their community internship program. In the past two years students have been placed at the Harry Meyering Center, Hearthstone of Minnesota, Girl Scouts, Head Start, Planned Parenthood, the MSU Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Center, and Alliance for Justice. Students give positive feedback about the skills they gain during their internship. Ruthie Shanklin completed her internship in the MSU Women’s Center, working on various computer projects. Ruthie reported that her internship experience was a crucial factor in landing a technology-related job with Midwest Assistance Program, Inc., for which she was one of over 60 applicants!
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We would like to thank all of those who supported the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences with pledges and/or continuing contributions.
Each Year SBS honors faculty members, chosen by their departments, for excellence in teaching.

Faculty honored this year:

Winifred Mitchell
Anthropology

Ashok Chowdhury
Economics

Hahn Huy Phan
Ethnic Studies

Amy Richert
Geography

Donald Strasser
History

Tamara Wilkins
Law Enforcement

Edison Perdomo
Psychology

Richard Wintersteen
Social Work

Pedro Thomas
Corrections

Penka Skachkova
Women's Studies

see: www2.mnsu.edu/csocbeh/Faculty/spr2002teacher.html

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Scholarship Spotlight:
Embracing Diversity through support of Ethnic Studies

"There is nowhere you can go and only be with people who are like you. Give it up."
– Bernice Johnson Regan, American Cultural Historian

One of the great benefits of a university education is the opportunity to learn from people with a variety of backgrounds and many different experiences.

During the past year, the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences has offered many opportunities for students to learn more about our nation's rich diversity. We have had many distinguished speakers on campus, giving our students access to leaders and activists from around the world. Students in Ethnic Studies classes have also visited various communities, including Christian churches, Islamic Mosques, the Sisseton-Wahpeton Sioux Tribe in South Dakota, a Hmong American community, an African American Community, a Somali Community, and Mercado Central in the Latin/Mexican Community of Minneapolis. Students across the college learn from culturally diverse faculty and benefit from their generous support.

This year, the Ethnic Studies faculty established a scholarship fund for their students. The first Ethnic Studies scholarships were awarded at our Spring Scholarship Luncheon; one award is for academic excellence, and one award is for overcoming social or cultural challenges while maintaining academic excellence. These scholarships are important for the continuing success of our students.

If you are interested in learning more about how you can support Ethnic Studies scholarships, please contact Yueh-Ting Lee, Chairperson of Ethnic Studies at leey@mnsu.edu or 507-389-5013, or Susan Taylor at susan.taylor@mnsu.edu or 507-389-1006. You can send contributions directly to the MSU Foundation, designated for Ethnic Studies, to University Development, 121 Alumni Foundation, Mankato, MN 56001. Thank you!

First Annual SBS Scholarship Luncheon

The 1st Annual SBS Scholarship Luncheon was held April 26, 2002, with over 70 scholarship recipients, donors, SBS Advisory Board members, and faculty present. It was a great success!
Upcoming Events to Watch for:

Join us for a SBS Reunion and Homecoming Celebration in the MSU Touchdown Tent, Saturday, October 12, 2002, from 11 A.M. - 1 P.M.!

For current information about upcoming and past events in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, please visit our events website at:
www2.mnsu.edu/csocbeh/events/event2002-03.html

We would love to hear about the success of our graduates!

Please contact us, or your department, with the news you would like to share (include your degree, major and the year you graduated).

Contact:
Denise Thompson
Assistant to the Dean
College of Social and Behavioral Sciences
Minnesota State University, Mankato
111 Armstrong Hall
Mankato, MN 56001
or e-mail: denise.thompson@mnsu.edu