Intern Spotlight: Brooke Peterson

Compiled by Stephanie Wegmann

Brooke interned as a Design Intern with Communication and Marketing Services, CSB.

How did you find out about the internship and what was the application process like? As a sophomore, I began working as a student designer in the Communication and Marketing Services Department. After my junior year, my supervisor and I discussed the possibility of turning my student designer position into an internship involving a more focused graphic design project and more responsibilities. From there, we worked together to develop a project which would take a semester to complete. My application process involved writing a specific plan which was a detailed description of my project and timeline. In order to officially obtain the internship, I needed to have this plan approved by my supervisor as well as my faculty moderator.

What were some of the internship’s highlights? The highlight of the internship was the day I completed my project! I was able to compile an entire portfolio which included weekly journals, research, samples of my work, citations, my final project description and an actual mock up of the project I had completed. I was proud to hand in my portfolio for evaluation and was excited that I now had a professional tool to bring with me on job interviews.

What was a ‘typical day’ like? What were some of your major responsibilities? For part of my workday, I was responsible for communicating with on-campus groups and organizations to create promotional material for upcoming campus events. I would obtain information from these groups and use it to design posters, flyers, brochures, etc. I was also responsible for designing other projects such as the parent calendar and the promotional piece which was handed out at the State Fair last year. For the other half of my workday, I researched and developed my own line of mock-up packaging. This included brand development, logo design, and printing and assembling the actual packaging.

What were some of the challenges of your internship? The major challenge of my internship was having a long-term project. I had been acclimated to working on short deadlines and turning over projects within a few days. Once I started my long-term project, however, I had to learn how to work on a different timeline. Rather than having one big deadline, I had to establish multiple small deadlines which led up to the final completion of the project.

What did you learn? I learned that the time management skills I had acquired in my classes were the most transferable tool when it came to my internship. Due dates and deadlines are extremely similar and working hard to meet them is what made my working experience a success. I tried to treat every project like an assignment for which I was earning a grade. This ensured that each project would be completed on time; which helped me earn the respect of my clientele and supervisors.

What advice would you give other students interested in internships? Be creative! Look beyond the usual internship hunting web-sites and listings. Just because an internship isn’t posted doesn’t mean it doesn’t exist. Think about how you can turn your current on-campus job into an internship. Also, think about if there would be a possible internship in your major department even if it has not yet been done. If you can find a supervisor who is willing, you can pitch an internship which you have tailored to fit your own work experience-related goals. You may have an internship in mind which a member of the faculty or staff hasn’t yet thought of and therefore hasn’t posted!