

## How Can Internships Benefit You?

An internship is one of the starting points for placing your foot in the door for your career. It gives you an opportunity to share your skills with a potential employer before the hiring process for that first job begins. And The University of Memphis Department of Journalism hosted a panel discussion with professionals and emerging pros to share their knowledge and experiences on how internships can benefit you, especially for journalism majors. The motto for the event was to “go pro or go home.”

Dr. David Arant, U of M Department of Journalism Chairman, said, "An internship is your calling card for a professional job." It can give you hands-on experience you can't receive somewhere else. Amy Sharp, the executive vice president of marketing and operations at Sullivan Branding, feels that “it would be beneficial whether it's paid or unpaid because you're gaining skills.” Nowadays, companies are looking to potentially hire you. So you want to be sure you're giving your best and making a good impression. According to Sharp, a good impression means to "take initiative" and do good work. Also, the relationships you make are vital because those contacts may be useful in the future.

Walter Smith, a recent U of M graduate who now works for archer>malmo, gave advice on what can help you get hired. He said, "Clean up your social media." More and more employers are using social networks to post internships and jobs as well as checking out potential candidates online. The last thing you would want is to have your boss send a friend request and you're tagged in pictures partying with friends. However, when it comes to things you tweet about, public relations and social media coordinator of Howell Marketing Strategies Kiersten Bagley said, "Write eighty percent professional and twenty percent what you care

about." This is when making a separate account on all of your social media comes in handy. That way your professionalism can be detached from your personal accounts.

But if internships are vital in the journalism field, how early is too early to start? "It's never too early to look for an internship," said Smith. The sooner you start, the better. And because it was said that interning was a way to start off your career, sophomore and criminal justice major Donya Moore said, "I actually want to do an intern for Journalism now."

Internships are more than something that can look good on your resume. They can benefit you by preparing you for the real world. So the next time you think about passing up an intern opportunity, think about going pro before you go home.

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