

Internships have many advantages



Jeremy Busch

My rent was \$750 each month. My commute was 45 minutes each direction, which cost about \$50 each week. I woke up early and went to bed late. And I had the time of my life learning from people who have changed me forever. Last summer, I had the pleasure of interning in Washington, D.C., more or less the intern capital of the United States. Internships provide an incredible learning experience, a lesson frequently learned too late during college years.

Kirksville summers are fun — I'll admit that — but an internship has value that shouldn't be ignored. Start doing internships early during your college career, build on those experiences and there'll be job options waiting for you after graduation. The common notion is internships mainly are necessities for upperclassmen, but my experiences prove otherwise — I've felt underqualified compared to peers who started internships earlier than I did during college. Interning throughout most years of college not only gives you a wider range of knowledge and skills, but also will create connections for potential jobs after graduation.

One of the most obvious benefits of an internship is the networking capability. Coworkers and bosses often are more than willing to go out of their way to help a hardworking former intern, and the impact they have

on future job searches should not be underestimated. It's not just a resume booster, but also a tool for future opportunities. If you have enough good tools, starting a career becomes faster and easier.

While the adage, "It's not what you know, but who you know" certainly is true, it's what you know that will help you stand out. A college education, while invaluable, cannot teach the day-to-day challenges of the work environment, and often fails to emphasize real world skills. An internship can teach you how to work, how to treat others, how to succeed and how to be the best you can be.

Beyond the resume line, internships can be useful when you return to school. An improved work ethic can translate into better grades and taking more interest in classes. Because of my government internship, I have a greater interest in my communication law class — the internship displayed the real life application of what I'm learning in class. The internship has put what I'm learning into context, which makes the class seem more interesting and practical.

While internships have incredible potential for future opportunities, let's not forget they're a lot of fun as well. College students spend nine months straight trapped within the boundaries of the classroom, and an internship is an opportunity to break free of those restraints. No late nights at the library or Sunday study sessions — the nine-to-five schedule actually is quite cathartic. Internship schedules are predictable and consistent, which is much more convenient for social activities, unlike work schedules that might change week-to-week.

Like I've said, it's never too early to begin interning. Even if it's unpaid, it all pays off eventually. Find an opportunity, no matter how big or small, and give it your all.

Jeremy Busch is a senior communication major from Ballwin, Mo.

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Conspiracy theories have their merits



Holly Fisher

Without a doubt, conspiracy theories are spawned from the rubble of paranoia, distrust and the sinister whispers of the Illuminati. From the Roswell cover-up to the death of Elvis Presley, there is no limit to what conspiracy theorists will sink their teeth into. However, these theories are not just for crazies running around in aluminum hats. Conspiracy theories, in small doses, actually can be beneficial and break up the monotony of everyday life.

The two most important words in the world of conspiracies are "what if." A television reporter once announced, "We've finally put a man on the moon," and someone thought, "What if we didn't?" A government official said, "Area 51 is an experimental testing range for United States aircraft," but someone stood up and

said, "What if it's not?" When fluoride was introduced into the United States' water supply to help prevent tooth decay, someone legitimately wondered, "What if the fluoride is actually a toxin invented by communists to brainwash the American masses?"

That initial "what if" is how every conspiracy theory is born, and while what comes after might be borderline delusional, we should never take the desire to question the world at large for granted. We absorb new knowledge every day. When we become complacent in absorbing knowledge, we become complacent in producing it as well. The human brain needs exercise, and it needs to be let out of the box every once in a while or it'll dig itself into a rut. Conspiracy theories stretch these neural muscles and encourage us to think beyond conventional structures.

Surprisingly, conspiracy theories also can be useful for their intended purpose — to reveal the truth. Before Watergate, theories involving the Nixon administration floated around the same circles as theories involving government implants and tracking devices. The outlandish conspiracy theory claiming the CIA was conducting illegal mind control experiments seemed ridiculous until former President Bill Clinton revealed and apologized for Project MKUltra during 1995. People even chuckled when the U.S. government was accused of playing Big Brother, but when whistle-blowers like Edward Snowden stepped forward, they stopped laughing. Most conspiracy theories sound crazy, but that

alone doesn't mean they are untrue. Having a general knowledge of these theories also can reduce any initial panic when the truth finally does come to light. If people already are familiar with the concept, even as a conspiracy theory, then the shock value is lowered.

This is not to say all conspiracy theories are true or we should start taking preemptive measures to stop the government from listening to our thoughts. There are legitimate paranoid delusions and when those delusions become so great a person can no longer function within society, then an indulgence in conspiracies is no longer a healthy one. However, there is no harm in wondering whether or not the government is hiding aliens in Area 51 or entertaining the idea that pharmaceutical companies keep a cure for cancer under wraps to boost their profit margin.

Conspiracy theories are compelling ideas with interesting implications. They're fun, they're entertaining and they spice up the world we live in. Heck, there's even a conspiracy theory claiming conspiracy theories are the real conspiracies. How's that for a theory?

So don't be afraid to ask those questions. Dip your toes into the conspiracy waters and see where the current takes you.

Holly Fisher is a senior English and linguistics major from Elizabethtown, Ky.

AROUND THE QUAD

What's your favorite conspiracy theory? Why?

The weirdest one I've ever heard was about lizard people.

Adriana Long
Senior



That the government is covering up the JFK assassination because the evidence — the bullet angles and the witnesses — just doesn't add up.

Hannah Smith
Junior



I would say that the Berenstain Bears conspiracy. Unlike other conspiracies that blame the government, everyone remembers the name a certain way and the truth tends to blow their minds.

Adam Venneman
Senior



I read "The Da Vinci Code" so that whole thing — the Knights Templar — it's so... They put so much thought into it, I guess.

Lauren Farrow
Sophomore

