



CPE Briefing

On the Fast Track of Career Preparation

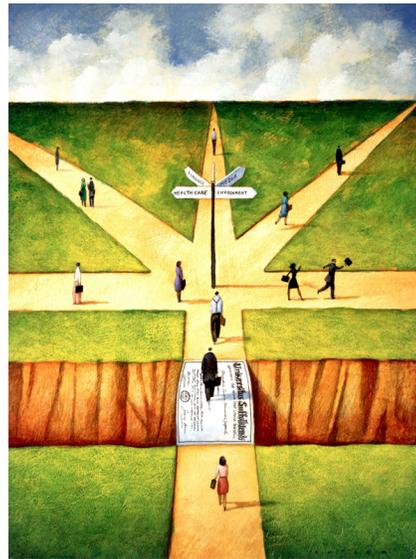
How the College helps students map out an early professional path

The Center for Professional Excellence enables students in the Elmhurst Experience to combine their personal development with their professional development as they determine who they are, what they stand for, and where they want to go in life.

To accomplish this goal, the CPE offers initiatives including Service-Learning (giving back to the community), study away (developing global awareness), job shadowing, mentoring, informational interviews, professional bridges, intercultural education, career education, and a variety of honors programs.

As part of its career education initiative, the CPE stresses the importance of early professional preparation. “We begin working with students as soon as they arrive on campus,” said Dr. Larry Carroll, CPE executive director. “We want to help them develop their professional preparation skills as early as they can, in conjunction with their academics. That is why we offer such things as informational interviews, networking, other career exploration opportunities and good, solid internships early in their development.”

Inside this newsletter you will find examples of students and recent alumni who have taken advantage of a variety



of CPE initiatives to help form their career goals and directions:

MENTORING & INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS

How **Samantha Burmeister** met an Elmhurst College alumnus through CPE who steered her toward Elmhurst and a potential career in sports media.

PROFESSIONAL BRIDGES

Michael Manocchio's groundbreaking experience of producing a Tennessee Williams play as a research project within the Honors Program.

INTERCULTURAL RELATIONS AND SERVICE-LEARNING

Rebecca Israel's remarkable journey from one being in need of help to one who now devotes her life to helping others in need.

NETWORKING

How **David Olson** of Federated Insurance met with members of the Elmhurst faculty and staff and now has become a potential resource for the school's job-seeking students.

INTERNSHIPS

Two internships paved the way into management at luxury leather-goods retailer Coach for Elmhurst College graduate **Jessie Welch**.

TRUE PROFESSIONALS

Established in 1997, the Center for Professional Excellence (CPE) aspires to build true professionals. What does that mean? It means students who take advantage of the many services and rich experiences offered by the CPE will be better prepared for their future careers—as well as being effective contributors to society. The CPE is proud to connect mentors and organizations with students from one of the top tier master's universities in the Midwest (as ranked, repeatedly, by *U.S. News & World Report*). It is one of the many ways that Elmhurst College demonstrates its synergy between liberal-arts learning and professional preparation.

In This Issue

Student Got Career Assist Before Freshman Year page 2

Meet Elmhurst's Own Impresario page 3

She was Coached into the Workforce page 3

She Committed Herself to Making a Difference page 4

Insurance Company Recruiter Likes What He Sees page 5

Student Got a Career Assist Even Before Freshman Year

Alumni broadcaster mentored
Floridian Samantha Burmeister in sports media

An alumni connection enabled **Samantha Burmeister** to gain priceless experience.



The Center for Professional Excellence prides itself in working with students as they explore professional preparation opportunities such as informational interviews, mentoring, and internships. But in the case of Elmhurst senior Samantha (Sam) Burmeister of Winter Park, Florida, the CPE pointed her

toward an alumnus to assist her with an informational interview and mentoring experience even before she entered Elmhurst as a freshman.

A HEAD START IN SPORTS MEDIA

Sam and her mother had visited the Elmhurst campus during her senior year in high school, recalls CPE Executive Director Dr. Larry Carroll. “She was a softball player, and was also interested in the field of sports media,” he said. “I contacted Dave Wills, (Elmhurst ’88), the radio voice of the Tampa Bay Rays baseball team, and he agreed to see her.”

When Sam was back home in Winter Park after the Elmhurst visit, she drove two hours southeast to the Tampa–St. Petersburg area to meet Wills. He was impressed with her enthusiasm and energy and soon had her helping with game notes, pitch counts, and other statistics in the broadcast booth.

GOOD WILL EMISSARY

“She was still undecided about college,” Wills said. “I passed along some of my feelings about Elmhurst, which included among other things the smaller class sizes, professors who know your name, and the overall quaintness of the campus.”

Wills serves as an unofficial good will emissary for his alma mater and returned to the campus last fall as an alumnus in residence. “I told the students that if a mediocre student and an even more mediocre baseball player can end up where I am, the opportunities are endless.”

Once at Elmhurst, Sam, a communication studies major, soon began pursuing internship opportunities. These included jobs in sports production at Chicago’s WGN-TV and in the news department at NBC affiliate WESH-TV in her home town of Winter Park.

JOBS LEAD TO MORE JOBS

At WGN, Sam staffed Chicago Cubs’ telecasts, usually working in the TV truck just outside Wrigley Field. In the course of her work, she also met players and coaches and worked at the Cubs Convention, an annual fan event held at a downtown hotel.

The WGN job indirectly led to another internship. Gordon Tech High School is in the same neighborhood as the TV studios, and Sam landed two jobs there: assistant varsity softball coach and a position at the school’s internal TV station, which is managed by the head softball coach, who also is a media/communications teacher.

Sam, who also has worked with the College’s Sports Information Director Kevin Juday, hopes after graduation to eventually become an executive sports producer in radio or television. She credits the College and the Center for Professional Excellence for facilitating her career development.

“The CPE requires you to reflect on your internship to see both the positives and negatives of the experience,” she said. “It helped me narrow down my ideas and is always willing to help with resumés and cover letters. I cannot tell you how often they looked at my resumé. And every time, they made it better!”



Senior **Samantha Burmeister** benefitted from some early career guidance from Alumnus **Dave Wills**, the play-by-play announcer for the Tampa Bay Rays baseball team (left) and his on-air partner Andy Freed.

EMPLOYER'S PERSPECTIVE

Insurance Company Recruiter Likes What He Sees



A risk manager at a Minnesota insurance company started recruiting at the College after meeting faculty and staff at a career fair.

"I've been very impressed with the Elmhurst students I've met," said David Olson, a regional risk manager for Owatonna-based Federated Insurance, which specializes in business insurance. "They've got communications skills, professionalism, and academic excellence."

Among his recruiting duties for Federated, Olson attends various career fairs and other networking events, some of them under the auspices of the Illinois Small College Placement Association (ISCPA), a consortium of 25 colleges and universities. It was at one of these fairs that he met members of the College's faculty and staff.

"I had not worked with Elmhurst before, but as I learned more about the school, I realized I had to get to the campus and see what was going on," Olson said.

Annette Coduto, employer relations specialist in the Center for Professional Excellence and Joan Vilim, an associate professor of business administration, met Olson at ISCPA's '09 CareerFest in Oakbrook Terrace. As a result of that meeting, he has interviewed

Elmhurst students and also has come to the campus for informational sessions about Federated's training programs.

Olson, who is looking for risk management consultants, makes it clear to students that these are not sales jobs, but rather salaried positions. So far, he has made one job offer to an Elmhurst student and was recently conducting interviews with another.

"Building strong relationships is an important part of the recruiting process," Coduto said.

"Knowing the recruiting needs and expectations of a company helps to better prepare our students. These relationships also have a way of inviting recruiters to become involved on campus."

That's the case with Olson, who is available to visit classrooms to discuss his company and his own experiences. He also volunteers to participate in the American Marketing Association's Mock Interview Day.

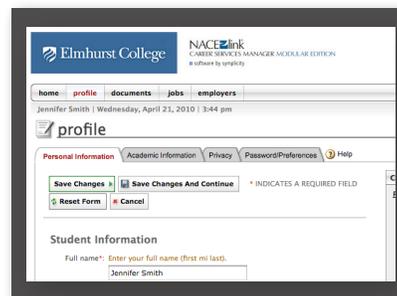
Coduto added that Elmhurst also has developed relationships with other companies that have hired students, both for internships and permanent positions. These include Harris Bank and Kellogg Co., companies that more typically focus their recruiting at larger schools.

"Knowing the recruiting needs and expectations of a company helps to better prepare Elmhurst students."

Annette Coduto

CPE employer relations specialist

ECconnect.com connects students and alumni with job opportunities and internships. The web page is also a **web-based bulletin board** for CPE events, job fairs in the Chicago area, workshops, and seminars. The site offers useful resources, such as what jobs are associated with particular majors and a guide to graduate schools.



There is also helpful advice on preparing resumés and getting ready for an interview.

A link to the **Illinois Small College Placement Association**, a consortium of 25 small colleges in the state of which Elmhurst College is a member, displays job opportunities and internships throughout the state.

NAME DROPPERS

Here are some of the companies and organizations that have provided opportunities for Elmhurst students.

Accenture
Blistex, Inc.
Bottomless Closet Inc.
Bulls/White Sox Academy
CBS-2 Chicago Broadcast Center

Clear Channel Communications, Inc.
Chicago Shamrox
Chicago Tribune
DuPage Dragons
Edward Hines, Jr. VA Hospital
Harris Bank
House of Blues Chicago
Kellogg Co.
Kraft Foods, Inc.
International Visitors Center of Chicago
LifeLink Corp.

Lite 93.9 FM Chicago
Lyric Opera of Chicago
Menlo Worldwide Logistics
Metropolitan Family Services
Morgan Stanley Smith Barney
Morningstar, Inc.
Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company
Opportunity International
Ray Graham Association for People With Disabilities
Ronald McDonald House Charities

U.S. Department of Commerce—Chicago
USG Corp.
Walt Disney Co.
WGN-TV
Wirtz Beverage Group
WKQX-FM Q101
WLUP
World Trade Center Illinois
World Relief—DuPage
WXRT-FM



Michael Manocchio benefitted from CPE's Professional Bridges program.

Meet Elmhurst's Own Impresario

Elmhurst senior Michael Manocchio, a major in theatre and English, last year became the first student to produce a play outside the school's theatre department.

Michael produced Tennessee Williams' 1973 work "Out Cry" as an independent research project within the Honors Program and with the help of the Professional Bridges program within the Center for Professional Excellence and presented it on campus.

Michael did the necessary research, filled out forms to get an endowment, and put together a budget, which was supplemented by CPE, says Julie Nosal, coordinator of Professional Bridges. "We helped him get the rights to do the play," she says. "He had to provide receipts for expenses and was reimbursed. It was a good learning process."

RAISED \$2,000

Michael agrees. He recruited a student director and found students and alumni to work as set designers. He also secured funding from campus organizations, including Theta Alpha Phi, the theatre recognition society. "We raised a little over \$2,000," he says.

He approached Suellen Rocca, an art department faculty member and curator and director of exhibitions,

who allowed him use of the Barbara Kieft Accelerator ArtSpace for the staging. There were six performances over two weekends at the ArtSpace, which seats around 50. "The play was well-attended and well-received," Michael said. "The play was a financial success as well. We turned a profit, which was donated to Theta Alpha Phi."

FROM COURSEWORK TO CAREER

The Professional Bridges program at the CPE provides a bridge between academics and prospective careers. It reimburses students who are pre-approved to attend professional conferences, seminars, and networking events in their areas of interest. Before being reimbursed, however, students write a reflective piece on what they gained from the experience. After his production was completed, Michael reflected on the experience as well.

Michael, who has applied to master's degree programs in fine arts for acting, has performed in several theatre department productions. As part of his Honors Program, he works six hours a week in the CPE conducting information sessions for students planning to participate in study-away programs.

ELMHURST ALUMS AT WORK

She was Coached into the Workforce

An internship at the luxury goods maker Coach turned a job into a career for Jessie Welch '09.

Jessie, who started out at Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau, transferred after less than a year to Elmhurst, switched her major from education to marketing, and has never looked back. Today, barely a year after her graduation, she is associate manager (the No. 2 position) at Coach's Woodfield Mall store, one of the chain's top volume locations nationally.

Jessie already was working for Coach in a sales position when she approached Holly Coffin, internship coordinator at the Center for Professional Excellence, seeking an internship. "Holly told me that if I wanted to get a [college-approved] internship, I would

have to 'go deeper' into Coach," Jessie said.

Coffin explains that students seeking internships for academic credit for a current position must demonstrate that they will be taking on different responsibilities working on a specific project. "In Jessie's case, this meant she would need to pursue opportunities above and beyond what she was doing at the company and related to her field of interest," Coffin says.

Jessie's manager at Coach, seeing her potential, structured internships that enabled her to learn about different aspects of the company. During spring term of her junior year she worked at the Geneva Commons store in Geneva where she focused on

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 6]

Jessie Welch is associate manager—the No. 2 position—at Coach's store at Woodfield Mall in Schaumburg.

"Internships should be a requirement [in schools],... It not only develops you in the classroom but as a professional as well."
Jessie Welch '09



Giving Back

Rebecca Israel after graduation will work at nonprofit CEP Youth Leadership in LaGrange.

From the day she entered Elmhurst College almost four years ago, senior Rebecca Israel committed herself to making a difference in the world. Already she has.

Rebecca would be the first to tell you, her life has been a struggle. She emerged from a broken family on Chicago's South Side, did not attend school until second grade, and found herself behind classmates in basic skills including reading.

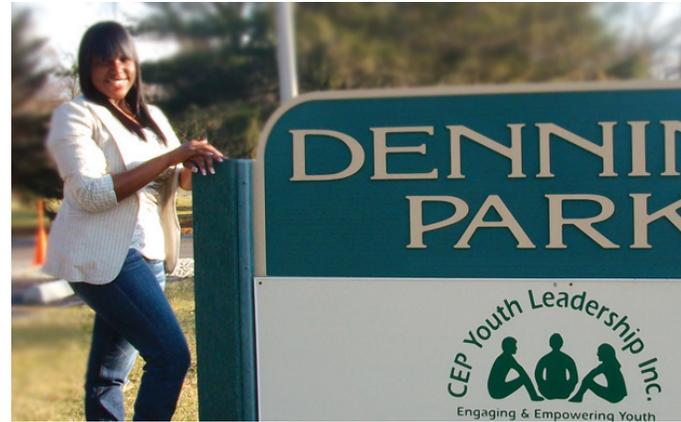
She eventually moved in with an aunt in Highland Park at 12, and, still lagging behind her peers academically, rapidly closed the gap. By the time she graduated from that North Shore community's prestigious high school, she was getting As and Bs.

THEY CHALLENGED ME

At Elmhurst College, which she entered with the help of scholarships, Rebecca has majored in communication studies and intercultural relations with a focus on social justice. For her first three years on campus, she worked several hours a week in the Center for Professional Excellence, as an intern and office assistant.

Rebecca quickly found the Center for Professional Excellence welcoming and career-focused. "It is a great place to get a professional point of view," she said. "They taught me to be open to change and they challenged me. Holly Coffin [the Center's internship coordinator] worked with me to build a resumé and obtain an internship. Dr. Larry Carroll mentored me in personal and professional leadership building and assisted me in obtaining my current position."

This internship, which will become a full-time position for Rebecca after graduation this spring, is with CEP Youth Leadership Inc. in LaGrange, an organization that conducts leadership programs for junior high and high school students in community and volunteer service.



Rebecca Israel's childhood was a struggle. But with the help of scholarships, she majored in communication studies and intercultural relations with a focus on social justice. After graduation, she will work at a nonprofit that trains high school students in community and volunteer service.

TRAINING YOUTH TO SERVE

For example, the CEP youth work in soup kitchens and food pantries and tutor younger children. The organization also assists other social service programs, such as the Feed My Starving Children project in Aurora and the Exodus program, which helps to outfit and furnish apartments for refugees arriving in the U.S.

In an earlier internship, Rebecca worked at The Bottomless Closet in Chicago, which helps women in transition from prison, welfare, rehab, and domestic violence. They are taught resumé building and job interviewing techniques and are supplied with clothes for their interviews.

Coffin praises Rebecca's ability to quickly grasp a situation: "At the Bottomless Closet, from the start she jumped right in and knew where to help."

Reflecting on her time at Elmhurst, Rebecca said she is grateful for the encouragement and support. "Now I want to be the person giving help to someone else," she said.

Q&A

How is CPE meeting the challenges of today's unsteady economy?

The CPE's internship, shadowing, and mentoring programs give students a head start so that by the time they enter the job market, they have some experience, some contacts in their field and have a good idea of where the best opportunities lie. They work to provide students with valuable contacts, which they can use to network for a more effective and efficient job

search. Internships are critical building blocks for resúmes and CPE works with students to develop and continually improve resúmes and cover letters so that Elmhurst students stand out from the crowd. Our staff members also coach students on interviewing techniques so that they present themselves in the best light to prospective employers. More importantly, CPE

staff members work with students to identify their strengths and interests and match those up with opportunities in the job market. And that's especially important in today's economy. Because when a job seeker is passionate about his or her field—that's the best sales pitch to any future employer.

[‘COACHED’ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3]

operations and auditing. A second internship during spring term of her senior year was at the Woodfield Mall store in Schaumburg, where she concentrated on sales and service, hiring, recruiting, and human resources.

“Internships should be a requirement [in schools],” Jessie said of her experience. “It not only develops you in

the classroom but as a professional as well.” And she has not forgotten her alma mater.

Recently, Holly Coffin got an email from Jessie, who is on Coach’s Hiring & Recruiting Committee for the Chicago District. Jessie outlined some job opportunities at Coach that she thought might interest Elmhurst students. “That was the perfect ending to a story about networking,” Coffin said.

A Sampling of What the CPE Offers this Year

- ✔ **Internships**, including business, entertainment, politics, even Porsche, Inc.!
- ✔ **Career Expo**
- ✔ **A “Study Abroad Panel,”** to hear experiences of students just back from overseas
- ✔ **TeacherFest**, a teachers’ job fair.
- ✔ **Networking events** (most job opportunities happen through networking...not want ads)
- ✔ **International Education Fair**
- ✔ **Service-Learning opportunities**
- ✔ **Interviews** (both the “practice” kind, in front of a camera, and the real thing!)
- ✔ **National Foreign Language Week**
- ✔ **Culture Fest**
- ✔ **Annual Student Research and Performance Showcase**
- ✔ **Guestship Lectures** celebrating women, Latinos, African Americans and members of the GLBT community.



Meet Internship Coordinator **Holly Coffin** who helps students land internships at companies, nonprofit organizations and government agencies. She works with them on their resumé and cover letter and also coordinates with a student’s faculty advisor to enable them to earn academic credit.

WHO TO CALL

Internships Holly Coffin 617-6457	International Education Dr. Wally Lagerwey 617-3604	International Student Services Alice Niziolek '99 617-3296
Career Education Peggy Killian '94 617-3625	Professional Bridges Julie Nosal '03 617-3440	Honors Program Dr. Mary Kay Mulvaney 617-6479
Mentoring and Shadowing Julie Nearing '01 617-3188	Intercultural Education Dr. Russell Ford 617-3104	Executive Director Dr. Larry Carroll 617-3114
Service-Learning Dr. Mick Savage 617-6488	Employer Relations Annette Coduto 617-3190	All phone numbers are 630 area code.

