

During a networking event this summer, someone told me that "a summer in D.C. could change the trajectory of your career." Reflecting on my personal and professional growth between May 28 and August 23, my career goals are more refined than when the summer began.

My role as a Program Intern at the Women's Foreign Policy Group was a dynamic one, mirroring the versatility required in any nonprofit. The other interns and I often quipped about our ability to seamlessly switch roles, from accountant to human resources manager, event planner, and social media analyst, all in a day's work.

My tasks ranged from event preparation to administrative support. I was responsible for finding event speakers, drafting invitations and event proposals, formulating questions, and researching



Here's a picture of all the interns at our first and largest event, the Celebration of Women Diplomats, where our small but mighty organization honored female ambassadors and DCMs at the Irish Ambassador's Residence in Washington, D.C.

foreign policy-related topics. I also compiled reports for board meetings, led our annual Mentor Match program, and wrote other necessary materials. This variety of tasks honed my skills and broadened my understanding of the nonprofit sector.

Most of my responsibilities supported WFPG's busy schedule. The organization is known for hosting four events per month, which kept the team occupied monitoring its constantly evolving calendar. The team of interns frequently brainstormed with the Executive Director to brainstorm topics, titles, speakers, and all materials required to bring our ideas to life.

There, I could tailor some events to my academic interests. After an event with Maria Corina

Machado that particularly piqued my interest, I offered to write a [blog](#) to publish on our website.

The role was also highly collaborative. Working in the office from 9 to 5 Monday through Friday, I learned to depend on my team and even become their friend. We developed a seamless working relationship, always offering to help when someone needed assistance but also wary not to overcrowd another's progress.

Program interns were tasked with setting up, checking in, taking notes, and providing other logistical support at the events. Once the program finished, interns were free to network, which I particularly liked because I could talk with the many accomplished women in the WFPG network. I laughed with Ambassadors, connected with young professionals in think tanks, and talked to students looking for careers like mine. I was delighted to be surrounded by people on the same path as me; it's incredibly motivating.

I knew I needed to leverage my summer in D.C. beyond work. I made a goal to turn some LinkedIn connections into coffee dates and step out of my comfort zone. After talking to professionals and taking further steps to learn career possibilities, I can proudly say that I've walked away from this internship with a five-year career trajectory and feel profoundly more confident in my abilities to pitch myself to employers and peers.

The Women's Foreign Policy Group is a small nonprofit with only an Executive Director, a Program Associate, and five full-time interns. Because of its small size, I was unable to receive a salary for this internship. I am incredibly grateful that the Pardee School Corgan Internship Fund could make this opportunity possible.



An aerial shot of a past event about the future of US-Mexico Relations at the International Student House of Washington, D.C., with speakers Lila Abed of the Wilson Center, Ambassador Ana Luisa Fajer, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Mexico in the US, and Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for North America Rachel Poynter.