

Career Services Internship Testimonial



Agnese Tonnina

JCU Degree Seeking – Double Major in International Affairs and Italian Studies Internship at the U.S. Embassy in Rome – December 2009 to June 2010

Hi! My name is Agnese, I study at John Cabot University and am double majoring in International Affairs and Italian Studies.

In December 2009 I started working as a JCU intern at the GEI OFFICE (Global Employment Initiative Office) of the American Embassy in Rome. My supervisor, Ms. Loretta Dusini, the GEI coordinator, was a great guide – she was always ready to teach me new skills and inform me on how best to carry out my work. She shared her office with me and so I was always aware of what was going on and thus could best assist her. Ms. Dusini, in fact, insisted that I learn all I could from her and never asked me to run errands like making coffee or things of that sort. From the first week I felt as an integral part of the office. She always told me “you are not here to waste your time, but to improve your working knowledge and learn how it is to work in an American workplace”.

The GEI is a mix between “Student Services and Career Services” at John Cabot. One of its roles is to care for the Embassy’s employees and their spouses providing them with all the best services they need in order to live in Rome. Loretta and I organized many workshops dealing with all types of issues from “How to deal with stress at work” to “How to write a powerful CV”. My main job was to find working possibilities for the Employees’ spouses, who had left their jobs in the US and followed their husbands or wives when they were transferred overseas to the U.S. Embassy in Rome.

Through the Human Resources office, I was able to make contacts with many important international organizations and companies, which had dealings with the Embassy and the GEI Office. For instance, at least once a week I organized Loretta's appointments with FAO, the UN or other embassies in Rome. Loretta always wanted me to be present at the meetings so I could understand and learn the best way to deal and communicate with people during our "working meetings". This has been very helpful for me as it taught me how to relate and communicate formally not only in English but also in Italian.

We also had the experience of organizing an Art Show at an art gallery in Rome for Martin Terry, an American artist, whose wife is an officer at the Embassy. Martin's art show was a success, and he thanked me at least a hundred times for my "helpful assistance". I felt really good knowing that, although I was a simple intern, my job was appreciated by everybody. Indeed, at the end of the first three months Loretta asked me if I would like to continue working with her at the GEI Office for three more months – I was really flattered by the offer and thus worked until the end of July!

This has been one of the best and most helpful experiences of my life. I have learnt a lot, met many people and improved my way of relating with others especially in an American working context. I think that an internship is a great opportunity, especially if one is involved with real. Almost all internships at the American Embassy are based on this principle. Interns do not do pointless things, they work like regular employees. I met many interns at the embassy and everybody seemed to be very happy with their internships.

I want to thank the Career Services Center for having given me the possibility of participating in such an experience, and I strongly advise all interested John Cabot students to apply for an internship at the American Embassy in Rome! Keep in mind, however, that if you are a U.S. citizen you must apply through the U.S. State Department website, if not you should apply through JCU's Career Services Center.

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