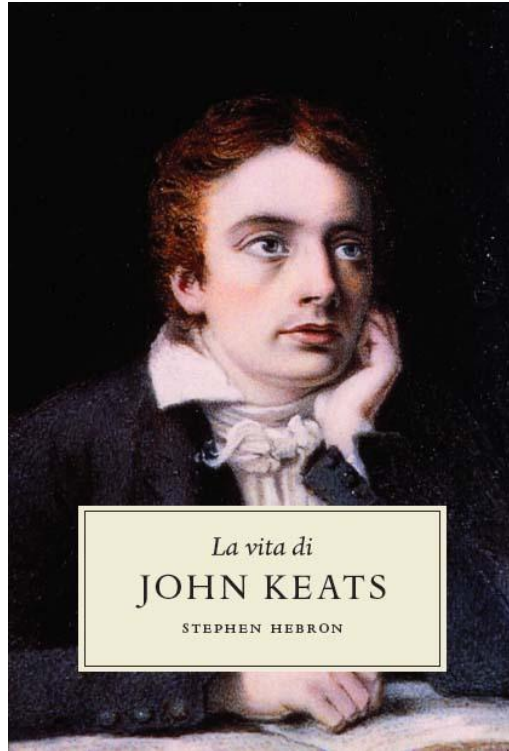


Career Services Testimonial



Maria D'Alessandro

**JCU Degree Seeking – BA in English Language and Literature, Minor in Communications – May 2009
Valedictorian 2009**

Internship at the Keats-Shelley House of Rome

My name is Maria D'Alessandro, I am Italian and was accepted at John Cabot University in Fall 2006 having graduated from *the Liceo Classico Vitruvio of Formia*. While English is not my native language I chose to pursue a BA in English Language and Literature at JCU. At the end of my junior year, I applied and was selected for a full time summer internship at the Keats-Shelley House of Rome. I was the first JCU student to participate in a “for-credit internship” at the KSH thanks to my advisor, Professor Shannon Russell, who first encouraged me to take advantage of this opportunity. I am also grateful to the Career Services team, who reviewed my application and *Curriculum Vitae* and prepared me for the interview at the Keats-Shelley House. Thanks to their assistance and my determination I was selected for this prestigious internship.

The KSH is a small yet dynamic Literary Museum and my experience there had a strong influence on my decision to change my academic path. I was exposed to a wide range of activities and tasks and learned a great deal about work ethic and dedication to one's job. I highly admired the professionalism of both the curator and the assistant curator. Thanks to their constant supervision, I

learned a lot even if I worked there only for a summer session. My first tasks were assisting with the cataloguing of books and working in the book conservation field. Last year I translated many sections of the new KSH website into Italian - this was my first job as a translator!

Later on, in fact, I had the opportunity of working on a most exciting and intellectually satisfying project, the completion of the Italian translation of Stephen Hebron's Keats originally published by the British Library. The KSH had started this translation project to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the opening of the museum. The book came out shortly after with the title La Vita di Keats and is now sold in the museum's bookshop. Through this project I was also able to follow up firsthand on many steps of the editing and publishing process.

The most important and exciting discovery for me was to see that there is still a high need for English majors. My experience in working on the translation in Italian of Stephen Hebron's Keats, and the advice of KSH and JCU colleagues and professors strongly encouraged me to pursue graduate work, and to study even harder and more passionately. I am, in fact, currently enrolled in the *Laurea Specialistica* program in *Letterature e Traduzione Interculturale* at the University of Rome, Roma 3.

While at JCU and even after graduation, I kept in touch with the KSH and organized small groups of student volunteers from JCU to help the KSH museum, which is a self-funded institution, with its book conservation work. This turned out to be a wonderful learning experience for my fellow students and a valuable community service activity. The world of cultural heritage, introduced to me at KSH, faces many challenges today; yet hard work, passion and creativity can surely help overcome and solve a number of them.

In addition to widening my horizons in terms of future career possibilities, this internship at the KSH allowed me to discover some abilities and interests I was not aware of. I realize that the skills and knowledge acquired at KSH will be of great help to me in the following years.