USC Connect’s
FALL
SHOWCASE
2019
Friday, November 22
Hollings Library
Program Room
2-4 p.m.
USC CONNECT

is the comprehensive integrative learning initiative at USC Columbia, Lancaster, Salkehatchie, Sumter and Union to support all students in enhancing their Carolina education by connecting within and beyond classroom experiences.

From the Executive Director:

Welcome to the 6th Annual USC Connect Fall Showcase! We are excited for our Graduation with Leadership Distinction students to have the opportunity today to inform us about all of the exciting experiences they have had beyond the classroom and how that relates to their in-class experiences. We are especially grateful to our reviewers for sharing their time and expertise to help students stretch their thinking and reflect on their experiences to think about ways they can use what they’ve learned to make a difference in the world, the core of integrative learning. We look forward to the enlightening and fruitful discussions that will come from these poster presentations.

Thank you to the USC Connect staff for organizing this thought-provoking afternoon of idea exchange for our students. We also appreciate the support of our partners in the Office of Undergraduate Research and look forward to more exciting presentations at Discover USC on April 17, 2020 at the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center!

Congratulations to all of the participants! We are proud of all your accomplishments that have led you to this point and look forward to learning more about how you will bring these experiences together to address the challenges of the future. We appreciate you sharing your wisdom with us and celebrate your achievements today.

With appreciation for your support of integrative and experiential learning at USC, Lara Ducate, Ph.D.
USC CONNECT’s 5 Pathways to GLD....

- Community Service
- Diversity and Social Advocacy
- Global Learning
- Research
- Professional and Civic Engagement

USC CONNECT Learning Outcomes

Students will:

1) Provide examples of beyond the classroom experiences in which they have engaged and describe how one or more beyond the classroom experience has contributed to their learning.

2) Articulate examples of beyond the classroom experiences that illuminate concepts, theories, or frameworks presented in their coursework including a clear description of elements of the beyond the classroom experience that are consistent with or contradictory to the identified concept.

3) Thoughtfully connect examples, facts, and/or theories from more than one experience, field of study, and/or perspective such as describing the similarities and differences across experiences, fields of study, or perspectives.

4) Pose solutions to problems (i.e., make recommendations) that incorporate learning from both beyond the classroom and within the classroom experiences, articulate how their decisions are supported by what they have learned through their experiences and content.
Someone wise once said, “In the end, we only regret the chances we didn’t take.” This explains, perfectly, the process it has taken me to get closer to “finding me.” Knowing exactly what I am interested in, I now crave more experience. My goal now is to be the best Broadcast Journalist I can possibly be. I’ve taken on multiple internships, I’ve shadowed multiple anchors/reporters in the business, I’ve sat in on every journalism-related event, I’ve built and perfected my resume and online portfolio, and I even attended every journalism networking event possible. Out of all of those, I think my best decision was to join the Student Gamecock Television (SGTV), the news club for the university. Through this club, I got the opportunity to practice being an anchor, a reporter, interviewing people, covering events, and even practicing my editing skills. I enjoyed this club because I’ve gotten better at what I love and I get to be around people who are just as passionate as I am. While in the club, I found myself constantly thinking of ways certain shows could be better/run smoother, but I was only the anchor/reporter - for me to create REAL change I would have to be the producer - which is honestly a scary position. The producer is in charge of the entire show, they distribute roles to everyone else in the news room so their show can run as close to “as planned” as possible. Although this is very intimidating, I figured this club would offer me with the best opportunity to try, and I was right! I got to shadow the producers and gathered a better idea of what to expect.
Nursing in Nicaragua: Providing Free Health Care to a Small Community

In Ticuantepe, Nicaragua there is a small community of people who live without many of the comforts Americans are so accustomed to, such as cars and electricity. They heat their one-bedroom houses with wood stoves and walk almost everywhere. Most of the people of Ticuantepe do not have access to healthcare. My freshman year at UofSC, I registered for UNIV290: Integrative Learning through my Capstone Program. Through this course, I was able to visit Nicaragua and engage with the local people of Ticuantepe for a week with the other pre-health majors in my class. The purpose of this class was to learn the basics of healthcare so that we could set up a free clinic for the locals. While managing this clinic, we performed assessments and gave people basic supplies that we had acquired via donations such as vitamins, Tylenol, Benadryl, mosquito nets, and toothbrushes. Around fifty people each day came to our clinic with various needs. I was able to see patients presenting with many problems that are not common in America, such as rare skin conditions and malaria symptoms. Many children came into the clinic with coughs due to the large amounts of smoke from burning wood in the home. Because of this trip, I have not only increased my knowledge of healthcare, but also of a new culture.

The week I spent in Nicaragua was one of growth, learning, and exploration. I now feel confident in my ability to care for patients of varying backgrounds because of my time spent in Nicaragua. Through this experience I hope to give unbiased care to patients of all cultures in my future nursing profession.
Over the summer, I started working as a student nurse tech at PRISMA health. I was assigned to a heart failure specific unit in the heart hospital at Richland. Following the completion of my foundations course as an upper division nursing student, I am certified as a nursing assistant which qualifies me to work as a patient support technician. As a part of my job description, I received further training specifically in performing EKGs and phlebotomy. As a nursing major at UofSC, this internship gave me the opportunity with more hands-on experience relating to patient care. Unlike at clinical, I was no longer working with a preceptor to complete tasks, so I was solely responsible for safe patient care, time management, and judgement regarding prioritization. My work as a tech gave me more experience in documentation of care, increased my comfort level at the bedside, and improved my confidence in my ability to perform common tasks such as blood sugar monitoring or bathing patients. A huge part of my duties on the unit was phlebotomy, which I knew had been a weakness of mine in the past. Getting this job gave me the chance to get a lot of practice sticking patients for blood draws and forced me to focus on and overcome that weakness. Gaining this work experience has confirmed my career choice and given me more confidence going into my last semester of nursing school. I hope to continue working this job alongside my preceptorship in school until I graduate to improve even more on my patient care abilities.
This past summer I interned with Figue, a luxury, bohemian brand, in New York City. I worked cross-functionally completing ad-hoc tasks within all the departments, such as merchandising, wholesale, product development, design, sales, and accounting. I wanted to intern with Figue to gain experience in my major concentration, fashion merchandising, so I could be sure it was what I wanted to pursue post-graduation. I learned how fast paced and meticulous the fashion industry is and multiple career paths I could take with my degree. I learned a lot of the lingo used in the industry and the extensive process of getting a collection into the hands of a consumer. My internship with Figue really impacted me by stirring up my passion for the fashion industry. Prior to my internship I was becoming apprehensive to the idea of graduating and taking on the daunting task of making it in such a cut-throat industry. However, now I am more eager than ever to carve my path in the world of fashion.
During Fall and Spring semester of 2016, I studied abroad at The Chinese University of Hong Kong. In Spring Semester of 2019 I studied abroad at Tsinghua University in Beijing, China. Prior to beginning my Undergraduate degree at The University of South Carolina, I had never studied Mandarin Chinese and never left the United States. I viewed Hong Kong and mainland China as a way for me to immerse myself in a place within many differing political, economic, and social viewpoints that challenged what I had known growing up. Both Universities offered an Asian, and in many cases, uniquely Chinese, perspective on world events. As an individual who plans to build a career on the foundation of U.S. and Chinese relations, I wanted to know where our values overlap, where they are starkly different, and how the cultural chasm can best be bridged together between these two global superpowers. Between the ages of 19 – 22, I travelled across China and greater Asia seeking answers to these questions. Relying on lessons from history, challenging personal conversations with friends, lectures and anecdotes from professors, speakers from a number of international gatherings, and my own personal research, I experienced a period of exponential growth that has brought me closer to answering the aforementioned questions. Understanding the importance of fostering a global mindset has been the mainstay of my Undergraduate experience, giving me a competitive advantage in the job market and a unique process for producing dynamic solutions to complex problems.
During the spring 2018 semester I studied abroad at Deakin University in Burwood, Australia. Burwood is located about one hour outside of Melbourne which is the second largest city in Australia. I decided to study in Melbourne because it has one of the biggest sport cultures in the country. Melbourne is home to most of the Australian Football League teams and multiple soccer, basketball and rugby teams, which gave me the opportunity to experience both familiar and unfamiliar sports. As an Exercise Science major and aspiring physical therapist who wants to work with athletes, this city was the best place for me to learn more about sports. During my time studying abroad in Melbourne, I learned more about the perceptions of injuries within certain sports and how they compare to the United States. I plan to work with sport injuries in my future career and having a better understand of views around the world will set me up to be a more well-rounded individual. Not only did I study abroad in Australia, I studied abroad in Sienna, Italy where I got the first opportunity to travel outside the country by myself. This experience prepared me to become more of a global citizen as well as reassuring myself in my ability to be independent in not one but two different countries with two different cultures. Without either of these experiences, I would not be who I am today, which is a confident and more informed individual.
I had the opportunity to backpack the Middle East across Egypt, Syria, Israel, West Bank/Palestine, Kuwait, Jordan, and the United Arab Emirates. This beyond the classroom experience taught me to practice a global mindset and showed me up close the dynamics between multi-national corporations (MNCs) and the countries they operate in. Studying Arabic for two semesters at UofSC, was crucial to making the most out of this experience so I could navigate the local language and cultural practices such as prayer and wearing a hijab. By celebrating Ramadan and spending time in mosques, I cultivated a global mindset by blending into the culture and forming relationships with local people. Based on my Islamic Finance and Economics class, I learned MNCs adapt their products based on the culture, which I saw in Kuwait when I visited Zara, which offered a more conservative clothing line. In Economic Globalization class, I learned how conflict can impact MNC activity and cripple the economy. By traveling to Syria and West Bank/Palestine, I saw first-hand the lack of commerce and spoke with locals in refugee camps about their experiences who respected my attempts to speak Arabic and wear a hijab. This experience of backpacking the Middle East challenged me to interact with people completely different than myself, think critically about the news I was reading versus what I was seeing, and lastly, have an open mindset.

All of these things, will one day help me be a better international business leader.
The internships and work experiences you have in college influence the kind of attitude and mentality you will sustain throughout your professional career. During my time at the University of South Carolina, I have worked major sporting events; like the Breeders Cup, and completed a 13-week internship. These experiences have challenged me to learn from my mistakes and given me a new perspective on the kind of person I want to be when I conclude my time here at UofSC. The summer of my sophomore year, I completed an internship as a youth basketball coordinator with Middletown Township Parks and Recreation. In this internship, I was in charge of scheduling gyms, staffing coaches, managing registration for over 260 youth participants, updating their social media accounts, and loading equipment before and after the games. This gave me first-hand experience with marketing and event management. As a sport and entertainment management major, we develop skills in marketing and promotions, sales, event management among other areas involved with a sport organization. From working at major sporting events, to interning as a basketball coordinator I’ve gotten experience applying these skills and learned the value behind communication, networking, and being a situational leader. I hope to utilize the skills and lessons that I’ve learned and apply them in future jobs and internships leading to individual and professional growth.
I have always been drawn to animals. This passion is what led me to seek out an animal rehabilitation center. In the summer of 2018, I had the privilege of interning at Carolina Wildlife Center (CWC) in Columbia, SC. CWC is a nonprofit organization that saves hundreds of native animals every year ranging from birds to reptiles to opossums. My main tasks included feeding and cleaning the birds and opossums, preparing meals, as well as general upkeep of the building. I was able to interact directly with the animals and witness firsthand the difference people were making at CWC. I learned so much about how to help these animals. For example, if you find a baby bird that appears to have fallen from its nest, you are to leave it be. It most likely is a fledgling and is learning to fly. Falling is a part of this process. This type of knowledge has enabled me to provide better care to all animals at the center and outside in nature. My passion to help rehabilitate injured wildlife has grown since interning at CWC. It is important to me that we treat animals and their homes with care and to respect their environment. I hope to expand my training with animal rehabilitation, and ultimately work with larger animals. I also would like to explore the connection between wildlife rehab and conservation. Combining these concepts will make a huge difference to the animals and the environment. Gaining more experience with rehabilitation will enable me to play an important role in educating the public about what each of us can do to help save this beautiful planet and all of its creatures.
Although technology has made communication more accessible, it has not thoroughly bridged the disconnect between those of different generations. I realized that this is true when I became a University 101 peer leader in the Fall of 2017. As a Peer Leader, I was invited to lead discussions, prepare lesson plans, and serve as a resource to a freshmen class in their transition into college life. While both my fellow students and I were all considered to be “Generation Z,” I still faced many obstacles when trying to communicate with them, as there seemed to be many disconnects just from our few years in age difference. This was also true between my co-instructor and me, as we had a difficult time communicating our goals to each other. Through this experience, I learned the importance of active listening and utilized this skill to better communicate with those of all ages. My presentation will display how effective communication affected productivity in the classroom, as well as show the importance of active listening in leadership roles regardless of age.
Back in the summer of 2018, I worked as a Nuclear Generation Intern at the Duke Energy Catawba Nuclear Station. The Catawba Nuclear Station produces energy using two nuclear reactors. In my time at UofSC, I took classes in industrial controls and power electronics, which directly relate to most of the processes used in these plants. My time at Duke Energy gave me an opportunity to work with these topics and equipment in ways I never got to at school. I was also able to take part in North American Young Generation of Nuclear (NAYGN). This led to several conferences and events in uptown Charlotte with young professionals in the nuclear field. This gave me opportunities to learn from people who are closer to my age while creating relationships with successful people. I also got to learn about the political environment around nuclear energy and the reasons why it wasn’t at forefront of the conversation about clean energy. This position helped me see why I needed all my electrical classes at UofSC but it also showed me the importance of my other courses such as introduction to mechanical engineering. This class as well as my Carolina Core electives helped me to succeed in this position. This experience led to me receiving an offer from Duke Energy for a full time position upon graduation at the Robinson Nuclear Plant as a Nuclear Engineer I.
This summer, I had the pleasure of working as a nurse extern with the Prisma Health system. I worked for two months with a registered nurse on a medical-telemetry floor at Prisma Health Baptist Hospital. This type of unit is for sick patients who need to have their hearts monitored continually. During my time at the externship, I gained valuable knowledge about the working nurse. I gained insight into smart time management and vital experience of appropriate prioritization. Along with my preceptor, I was able to influence the health of many sick people in a positive manner. On top of working a registered nurse’s whole schedule, weekly, there were seminars put on by the nurse manager of the extern program. Each week we learned about new topics such as shared governance and how to effectively minimize infection rates. Shared governance is a more modern idea about management where each person can help make healthcare, or other career fields, better; it is a sort of democratic management style. On top of all the other incredible knowledge gained, I also put together a project surrounding the importance of effective hand hygiene. From this nursing experience, I will be able to be the best possible new nurse when I graduate this December and begin working as a registered nurse myself.
This past summer, I interned at the South Carolina Department of Revenue doing information security with the Governance, Risk, and Compliance team. The mission of the agency is to administer the revenue and regulatory laws of the State with integrity, effectiveness and fairness to all taxpayers, while maintaining the highest security and the protection of taxpayer information. Working with information security, my position was an integral part of reaching the organization’s goals by securing and protecting PTI, STI, and FTI. My internship gave me hands-on experience in IT security that greatly enhanced what I learned at UofSC as an Integrated Information Technology major. I learned the importance of the IRS Publication 1075, NIST, and PCI standards for securing sensitive information, which were all covered in ITEC 493 – IT Security for Managers. One specific task I accomplished during my internship was cleaning up the agency’s exceptions, bringing the total number from over 700 to 29. I also updated the agency’s whitelist from over 10,000 items to less than 200. I had a very important task of managing the agency’s SCSEMs for their upcoming IRS audit, managing 60 SCSEMs over the course of four months, updating them with any changes. Completing this internship showed me how important it is to follow policies and procedures, as well as how much work security analysts do behind the scenes to protect their information. I hope to take these information security skills with me to assist me in starting my career as an IT professional.
In May of 2018, I travelled abroad to The Netherlands through the Capstone Scholar Maymester Program. During this trip, we were fortunate to partner with the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam and participate in their Memory Walk program. The program focused on recognizing inequality and human rights violations and then encouraged us to critically reflect on how those issues are presented in different monuments and memorials around Amsterdam. My group and I decided to create a documentary about a nearby monument that memorialized the persecution of homosexuals during the Holocaust. This piece of the story is often overlooked when discussing history. Our project allowed me to explore the atrocities of the Holocaust, while also looking ahead at how even today, LGBTQ individuals are continuously experiencing human rights violations. This documentary created an opportunity for me to reflect on the countless injustices they and others face in everyday life. It pushed me to pursue a career in victim advocacy and challenged me to fight for justice through being an attorney. Attorneys have the ability to create real change and impact hundreds of lives that so often experience persecution and injustice, and I was able to discover my passion for that mission through my trip to The Netherlands.
Throughout my experiences within and beyond the classroom here at UofSC, I have been passionate about a common theme in each environment. What I have enjoyed and learned most about is the need for connection and belonging in every environment. I have worked in many diverse settings such as business professional, working with children, and customer service. For two and a half years, I held an internship at a PEO called Propel HR. Here, I was responsible for filing, auditing, creating and organizing spreadsheets, and greeting and assisting clients at the front desk. Additionally, I have been a leader and mentor for middle-school aged girls for two years by working with my church’s youth group. I also worked at a children’s camp this past summer where relationships were valued above all else. Each of these experiences has tied into my psychology and counseling classes discussing the need for social relationships. As an aspiring counselor, all of these experiences and learning opportunities has encouraged and inspired me more to become a primary support system and active listener to those around me.
In May 2019, I was fortunate enough to take part in a Maymester called Business in Japan, which consisted of business visits and cultural experiences in Tokyo, Kyoto and Nagoya. The purpose of Business in Japan was to gain first-hand exposure to another country’s culture and business practices and develop an understanding of how these differences can affect interaction in business and in everyday life. Before this, I had studied abroad for a semester in Florence, Italy, where I became passionate about exploring and learning about other cultures and established a foundation of independent problem-solving skills. This is what sparked my interest in an international career path and motivated me to expand my outlook and education further in Japan. While in Japan, I was challenged personally and academically. My problem-solving skills were put to the test after being stranded from my group, and the result of this situation led to a better overall learning experience as well as personal growth. Throughout the course, the businesses and manufacturing sites I visited allowed me to not only develop a better understanding of Japanese culture and business, but also see the world through a different lens and then apply it. I was able to return to UofSC and implement the knowledge and skills I gained, and currently feel more confident and in my ability to succeed internationally in my career(s). My time in Japan was a critical factor in my entire experience at UofSC as well as a steppingstone to my future endeavors.
I have spent eighteen non-consecutive months working at DAK Americas, LLC, as a chemical engineering co-op and process engineer. I worked three rotations as a chemical engineering co-op, one rotation as a research and development co-op, and have spent the last four months in my full-time position as a process engineer. All of my responsibilities have, in some way, dealt with the production of polyethylene terephthalate (PET), DAK’s main consumer product. I have been able to work in operations for the production of PET, its precursor chemical PTA, and in the R&D team for perfecting the product and researching new technologies. These experiences have given me first-hand experience of the role of the engineer both in the workplace and in the greater world itself. I have been able to apply concepts learned in school to my job as well as the inverse. The greatest opportunity I have had was during my Spring 2018 rotation in which I was a major part of a process experiment to change the product recipe in response to quality issues. This experience has led to a full-time position as a process engineer in the PET process.
During the summer after my sophomore year, I studied abroad at La Universidad del Pacífico in Lima, Peru. As a Spanish major at the University of South Carolina, I knew I wanted to travel to a country I could practice my language skills and after studying in Spain in high school I looked all over South America. The program I found combined two key aspects of my life: learning and service. First, I studied for four weeks taking amazing courses; one discussed Spanish Literature and another focused on the socio-economic and political reality of Peru. These two courses were incredible and dynamic as I was learning for every moment of class as I balanced speaking, writing, and even thinking in Spanish. Then I volunteered through a service-learning internship with La Casa de Panchita, an employment agency teaching women about their rights as domestic laborers and encouraging women throughout the community. Being able to give back to Lima and serve through this employment agency is what gave my study abroad experience something special. No longer was I a tourist, but instead I was a true local by waking up early to go to work, riding the crowded Lima buses, and speaking with women from around the city about the power they have as laborers. This study abroad experience enhanced my overall knowledge of the Spanish language and broadened my understanding of new cultures. Due to my experiences studying abroad I am more confident in myself and cannot wait for the next adventure!
In my second semester of sophomore year, myself and 29 other Capstone Scholars went as a team of volunteers to provide treatment, medications, and donations to 3 underserved rural villages in Managua, Nicaragua, as an alternative spring break trip. In preparation for this trip, we were taught a variety of skills, such as taking blood pressure, performing physical exams, and reading a urinalysis, all of which we were able to utilize while working alongside local physicians and translators to facilitate all aspects of patient care from examination to diagnosis to treatment. Though my time in Nicaragua was short, it helped me grow both professionally and personally. In a professional sense, this trip helped me greatly in extending my medical knowledge in learning skills that are essential in pursuing a career in healthcare. Additionally, I learned an invaluable lesson in understanding and developing the vigilance and attentiveness required of healthcare professionals. In a personal sense, I came back from Nicaragua with a renewed sense of purpose to do better and to be better. Through every interaction, I was able to learn lessons that went beyond simply becoming a better pre-med student; rather, I learned more about the importance of hard work, humility, compassion, and communication. My trip to Nicaragua was an incredibly significant experience that has helped solidify my passion for medicine and establish pragmatic expectations for patient care.
During this semester, I was able to spend a substantial amount of time at Columbia Dermatology and Aesthetics for my exercise science practicum. This internship provided me with hands-on experience in a specialty that I would love to pursue more as a possible career. I had the opportunity to assist in many procedures including, shave removals, punch biopsies, ED&C’s and excisions. I took patients medical history/their symptoms and problems, followed by recording in-depth examinations and diagnosis’s through our online system. In addition, I ordered prescriptions for the patients, recorded pathology, set up surgical trays, refilled lidocaine’s, and anything else needed. Not only did I gain an extensive amount of knowledge within this field, but I also learned the hardship of medication affordability and grew my character in proper physician etiquette. I was also able to connect experiences I saw in the South African clinic to the skin conditions I saw here in Columbia. This internship reaffirmed me that dermatology is the field that I would like to go into and expanded my knowledge extensively. Through this experience, I hope to gain as a medical assistant in dermatology during my gap year, before attending graduate school for Physician Assistant studies.
The world is a global village. When I was in the fifth grade, my information technology teacher, talking about global information systems, looked up at the class and said, “The world is a global village.” This phrase stuck with me for years and drives how I see urbanization today. Every decision made impacts more lives than one can believe.

The choice to use one form of energy in this part of the world potentially affects the way of life of a different part of the world. As a civil engineer, I see it a responsibility to ensure decisions made towards urbanization is preserving resources for future generations and the needs of populations in other corners of the world now. This ignited my desire to investigate sustainable infrastructure design within civil engineering. In the fall of 2018, I enrolled in Life Cycle Assessment course where I did an independent study. I learned about the effect extraction of sand for building purposes has on marine diversity and coastal flooding. I analyzed alternative materials in place of sand for construction and its impact in five categories; human toxicity, land use, fine particulate matter dispersion, global warming potential and fossil depletion. I gained knowledge on life cycle stages of design and construction activities and what processes contribute the most amount of emissions. I hope to gain my LEED Green Building Certificate and ensure my career is tailored towards promoting sustainable civil engineering practices.
During my junior year at the University of South Carolina, I got the chance to be a Victoria’s Secret PINK Campus representative. I got involved with the program because I wanted hands on marketing experience and be able to pursue my passion in leading a team. With my major being Visual Communications, this experience greatly enhanced my knowledge in on-campus marketing, social media management, and content creation. I was able to produce daily social media content, such as pictures, videos and graphics, as well as host fun and interactive events throughout campus to promote the upcoming products. I was a leader of a campus team of 12 students where we met weekly to discuss and plan the next events/social challenges. One of my most memorable moments as a PINK campus representative was our “GRLPWR” campaign, which focused on empowering college-aged women to seek higher for themselves, support one another, and to never give up. This campaign included an interactive on-campus event, multiple social media posts to encourage girls to be their own girl bosses. My presentation will discuss the insights I gained as a Victoria’s Secret PINK campus representative, such as the importance of empowering women and what I learned as being a leader of a campus team.
The relationship between the University of South Carolina and the surrounding Columbia area is incredibly strong with the belief that helping others greatly improves the community. Before I came to college, I spent a lot of my time working with the underserved demographics by volunteering with food pantries and in lower income elementary schools. Here at UofSC, my passion for serving others drew me to Service Saturday, an organization on campus which gives volunteer opportunities once a month to students by working with community partners around the city. My largest contribution to the university has been my work with this organization to spark interest and passion for service. Through my time as a site leader and senior site leader, I have had the opportunity to not only recruit more students into joining the organization and partaking in the monthly events, but I have also gained incredible leadership, communication, and public speaking skills. However, even though I gained these attributes that I will be able to use for years to come, I believe my biggest success has been continuing a culture in the student body that gets excited about what they can do for the community around them.
During the summer of 2019, I completed 300 intern hours at The Therapy Place. The Therapy Place is an outpatient clinic for children with special needs. The age range of the children I got to work with were 6 months to 16 years old and their sessions included physical, speech, and/or occupational therapy. This clinic meant a lot to me as I really hope to work with this population after my completion of my doctorate in Physical Therapy. At the clinic I got to be part of many children’s rehab sessions. I loved how the physical therapist I worked with tailored each session to the child’s interest. One child who I got to observe and help out with multiple times a week was born with a type of Cerebral Palsy called Spastic Hemiplegia. Spastic hemiplegia causes muscles on one side of the body to stay in a constant state of contraction. Knowing the child’s love for basketball and baseball, the therapist kept the child entertained during sessions by including exercises that incorporated the sport. During his sessions we worked to strengthen parts of his body such as his quadriceps, hamstrings, gluten, hip flexors and ankles. These exercises helped him get stronger, improved his running and throwing abilities, and increased his balance leading to less falls. Seeing what physical therapy can do in an individual’s life is incredible. My experience at The Therapy Place reassured me of my career choice and motivated me to work even harder to become the best physical therapist I can be.
Changing Carolina Peer Leaders is a group of students who work with UofSC Student Health Services to plan and promote health programming events on campus and give presentations to university freshmen on topics regarding mental health, sexual health, and general wellness. I have been a peer leader since freshman year and throughout the last 3 years I have developed public speaking skills, explored my interests in public health and health promotion, and learned the importance of presenting information in a way that’s tailored to a specific audience. As a pre-medical student this has been an incredibly valuable experience. I have learned to enjoy public health and explore prevention and advocacy methods, which will undoubtedly help me as a future physician where my main focus will be on the prevention and treatment of illnesses and advocating for patients who cannot advocate for themselves. Peer leadership has allowed me to grow into a better leader, advocate, and speaker. I feel that these skills will allow me to be a better doctor in the future.
The most influential experience of my collegiate career has been my time teaching University 101 as a Peer Leader. These leaders co-instruct in a freshmen seminar class for first year student to be an intermediary between the student and the university. This position not only solidified my career decision but shaped the way I want to lead for the rest of my life. After my first semester, I decided to return for a second year and serve as an EDLP 540 leader so that I could guide another cohort of leaders. Working with students in both an individual and group setting gave me a variety of experiences in empathy, time-management, prioritization, facilitation, and cooperative learning. Through this experience, I have watched shy students make lasting friends, seen roommates and future bridesmaids be found, guided students through major changes and career exploration, helped solved roommate and relational struggles, and worked as a resource for first year transitions. This role has taught me how to use the business and leadership skills that I learned in class in a practical and meaningful way. Teaching has been so key in the formation of who I am as a leader in that it taught me that you have to know someone to truly lead them. The best leaders know the needs of their followers to motivate them, know their strengths and weaknesses to develop them, and know their fears and vulnerability to comfort them. I am more confident in my interpersonal skills and communication abilities because of this experience, and I know that it will serve me well in my future in Human Resources.
Last spring, I worked with Colonial Life Arena as their Group Sales and Premium Services Intern. Colonial Life Arena hosts concerts, events, family shows as well as the University of South Carolina’s Men’s and Women’s Basketball teams. During this internship, I sold suites to concerts, events and basketball games, and sold group tickets to family shows. I also provided hospitality services to those renting premium areas the night of events. As a sports and entertainment management major, this internship allowed me to gain experience and knowledge in premium sale/services for both athletic and entertainment events. Through this internship I learned selling techniques and customer service skills that allowed me to create and maintain relationships with clients we had at the arena. This internship allowed me to experience the challenges of working in the sports and entertainment field and to learn the professional skills needed to overcome a variety of obstacles. Furthermore, this experience allowed me to gain one on one mentorship in a position that required a lot of communication. Having this opportunity to work closely with my supervisor afforded me valuable time to ask questions and learn more about sales than I could have in another internship. Working at Colonial Life Arena left me exited and eager to find a position doing premium sales/services in an arena after I graduate.
During the summer of 2019, I interned for BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina (BCBSSC) in their Splunk Development team. I chose to intern for BCBSSC because I am interested in Information Technology (IT) within the Healthcare field. This involved working with different areas of an Information Systems team that replaced their old monitoring program, OPSview, with Splunk. During this experience, I learned a new technology that I hadn’t heard about, Splunk, and worked on implementing parts of the tool. I reformatted alerts to correlated events and created dashboards. I also spec’d out old reports in end-of-life software so they could be recreated in Splunk. Another task I had was taking screenshots of searches in Splunk and putting them into a word document and sending it to the audit teams to show that the data/information was being monitored. One of my final tasks was working with a team to build an internal website to track the lifecycle of the software and feed this information into a dashboard that is in Splunk. I learned a new technology and worked as a part of a team throughout the summer. I learned how to work with people that have different personalities and that are very protective of their work and not wanting to allow others to help and make changes. Participating in this internship reaffirmed my choice in IT as a career because I have learned that I really enjoy learning new technology and I want to make technology more user-friendly.
I studied abroad at the University of Warwick in Coventry, England. I chose to study at the University of Warwick because they are a partnered program with the University of South Carolina, and the History Departments allow for full credit courses. My desire to study and live abroad came from several travels to Europe. While in the UK, I studied a course on the history of cricket, a course on the history of trade, and history of the Renaissance. All of these courses were taught in different ways from UofSC, and challenged me to learn and study in a new way. All three courses had classes in museums which allowed for a visual connection to the past. The connection I made from viewing artifacts in person to what I was taught in the classroom made for a great way of learning. The six months I spent in England allowed me to realize that I want a career in museums. After coming back to the States, I started an internship with Historic Columbia as a curatorial intern, in order to pursue my passion for a career in the museum field.
Any human thought can be expressed in any of the 6,000+ world languages, but how languages express these thoughts varies. This study explores the question as to why second language learners face grammatical problems when they come across features, specifically (in)definiteness, that do not exist in their first language. The English language has the indefinite article “the” and definite articles “a” and “an,” while French has definite and indefinite articles in both singular and plural. Although the languages are expressing the same concept of definiteness, the way in which it is achieved varies. In order to test second language French learners’ knowledge on (in)definiteness, a semantic entailments task was administered online. For the task, participants read a part of a sentence and chose the correct continuation of that sentence. The results from this study can be applied to lesson plans within the foreign language classroom to help ease the path of second language acquisition. Outside of foreign language pedagogy, research behind feature reassembly can be applied to speech language pathology. Children who are acquiring a language, first or second, often face similar grammatical and conceptual difficulties.
The summer of 2019, I worked at a local alteration shop here in Columbia called Fine Tailoring. Fine Tailor does a multitude of alterations but specializes in bridal and pageant wear. As a way to broaden my knowledge of different pathways my degree could take me, I searched for nontraditional internships for a fashion merchandising major. We mainly tend to focus on the business aspect of fashion merchandising rather than the product development aspect. This internship was important for me to see the hands-on part of the fashion industry. During this internship I learned key skills used by designers and seamstress, and the many detailed steps to starting, owning, managing, and maintaining a small business. Over the course of my internship I helped alter many different garments and aided in the design and creation of three wedding dresses. This was the perfect internship for me, I was able to combine the knowledge I have learned in college and my love for fashion design and creating. Taking part in this experience has helped me see that my degree can take me in more directions than I previously thought. After this internship I have a stronger confidence in making a hobby or something that I love to do into a lucrative business.
Last summer I interned with the Washington Spirit of the National Women’s Soccer League (NWSL) in Maryland. It is the highest division of professional women’s soccer in the country and attracts top talent from all over the world. Soccer has always played a role in my life since I was young. It has taught me life lessons, gave me my best friends, and gave me an outlet to grow and I want to help grow the game for the next generation. As a Sport and Entertainment Management major at the University of South Carolina, this internship gave me the opportunity to see what my post-graduation life could look like. I was an equipment management/operations intern which allowed me to get experience working in many different aspects of a professional team. I worked daily with top professional athletes and make sure that they were prepared each day including tasks like setting and cleaning the locker room, cleaning boots before a match, and making their jerseys for each match. I was also responsible for game day set up which included setting the entire field and concourse for all game day necessities. From this I was able to learn all the little details that go into being successful.

It takes hard work and behind the scene action for something as simple as a game to take place. After graduation I hope to be an equipment manager for a NWSL team. I want this position because I like being responsible for the equipment and the pressures of the management position with the team relying on you, but all the fans have no idea what you do. It is the ultimate behind the scene role and that’s where I like to be.
Lifestyle Factors that contribute to a person’s state of health are very complex. Simply taking care of ourselves by eating well, staying active, steering away from drugs, not smoking, getting routine checkups and more can influence our health. But, other determinants of health like social and economic access to opportunities and healthcare play a vital role. People around the world and in the United States do not have the same access to healthcare opportunities. I experienced this extreme disparity abroad in Ecuador on a medical brigade trip with the Timmy Global Health chapter. Through my experience, I was able to gain insight into how different aspects of your life such as culture, where you live, and beliefs extend beyond into not just how you express yourself but how you interpret your well-being. Aspiring to become a physician one day, experiencing these health disparities among the villagers in Ecuador really opened my eyes to a new intellectual thought process that I hope to use as a physician one day. Learning that treating a patient goes beyond understanding the anatomical makeup of the human body and taking into consideration lifestyle factors and social determinants can help with addressing a person’s overall health.
My summer internships have played a vital role in my exploration to find my ideal career path. One summer I had the opportunity to intern with Textron Specialized Vehicles. I desired meaningful work with a global impact and I was able to do exactly that. During this time, I was tasked to help launch a new product with target markets of Australia and Canada. I assumed the position as product manager and worked with a variety of different team from engineering, finance, sales, marketing, and legal to ensure this product as a successful launch. It was a valuable experience that allowed me to contribute to the company, adapt my communication skills, and improve my professionalism as I pitched several ideas to executive leaders. This experience redefined my leadership style, and pushed me to a leader in my field. My presentation will discuss insights I gained during my internship, and how it impacted my future career.
My experience in college was largely focused on realizing the power marketing has on our society. From a negative standpoint it can encourage consumerism, lead to negative body image, encourage financial debt, or contribute to the declining health of Americans. The reality unfortunately is that marketing is to blame for a lot of issues we see in the United States. However, marketing in itself is not a negative concept. The definition of marketing is “the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large.” With the correct intentions, marketing can be a tool to promote health, or be used to de-market something negative such as cigarettes. This is known as Social Marketing. Social Marketing is an approach used to develop activities aimed at changing or maintaining people’s behavior for the benefit of individuals and society as a whole. What inspires me in these two definitions is “add value for customers” and “change and maintain people’s behavior for the benefit of society as a whole.” I think marketing needs to be focused on these goals instead of focusing on making a profit. Throughout college, I have done a lot of self-discovery about my ethics and interests. This self discovery increased my interest in personal health and wellness. My passions for health and wellness encouraged me to notice the negative impact that marketing has for the health on most Americans so I have devoted my college experience to utilize my marketing degree for only things.
Fall of my junior year, I decided to take on the role of University 101 peer leader. As a freshman at UofSC, I took U101 and had an amazing peer leader who inspired me to become one myself. My first semester of freshman year was such a critical period for me so I knew how important it was to have people who are there for you. I wanted to be that for a group of first-year students. In this role, I not only helped write lesson plans, but also facilitated activities that foster participation during class. Teaching U101 taught me a lot about communication, empathy, and leadership. The following semester, I co-taught a U150 class, which is like U101 but for international students. This class brought with it a whole different set of challenges and taught me even more about leadership and communication since none of my students spoke English as their first language. This semester, I am back for the third semester as a peer leader, but with my original teaching partner. With a year of experience under my belt, I am able to navigate this role with much more confidence and ease. Seeing the impact that our curriculum has on our students’ college transition helps me feel as though I am leaving a mark on my campus. Even if I don’t immediately step into a leadership role after college, I know I’ll be able to put the skills I learned to use in the public relations field.
Cross cultural communication and understanding is vital in today’s society. The topic of breaking down language and cultural barriers is explored through this portfolio. Through studying abroad in Málaga, Spain, I was able to appreciate the need for global interconnectedness and experienced the value this can bring to society firsthand. By incorporating past experiences from growing up in a multicultural household, travel to over 60 countries and lessons learned in the classroom, I am able to value the need for inclusion in global discussions and the extensive effects that one voice can have in changing world views.
Internal Marketing is the belief in taking care of the employees. With the belief and practice of internal marketing, employers will be able to form better relationships with employees, decrease turnover rates, and increase the guest’s experiences as a whole. Internal Marketing is the practice in which employers market to their employees by taking care of their needs and wants through benefits, time-off, and celebration for their services. With these benefits, employees are able to establish a long-lasting healthy relationship with their employers. My first encounter with Internal Marketing was through my Disney College Program, where I was able to help throw a celebration for the cast members whom worked for Walt Disney World for at least ten years. Experiencing the excitement and happiness that each cast member felt as the company gave back to them, was an incredible experience. With Disney World being a company that generates millions in revenue yearly, it would be easy for them to overlook the hard work of their front line associates. Instead, they always found a way to thank them for their services. Due to Disney’s use of Internal Marketing, they are able to make their cast members happy. In return, the cast members are able to give the guests an exceptional experience with every visit.
In April of 2019, a teenage couple’s car was struck by a taxi in a busy Columbia intersection, leaving their car totaled and smoking with the driver unconscious inside and the passenger in a state of shock in their seat. As a trained firefighter, I jumped out of my car and rendered aid on the scene, pulling the driver from the car and ensuring that the passenger exited the vehicle only moments before the car erupted into flames. During this time, people remained safely in their cars, recording on their phones, not one offering any help until after the flames started and everyone was a safe distance away from the vehicles. Through this, I learned first hand the detriments of the bystander effect, the decreased likelihood of an individual taking action in an emergent situation, the more people there to witness the emergency, but I also saw how once the first person jumps into action, a trickle effect slowly begins until the situation is filled with responders. After observing this, my focus switched to determining ways to help others overcome this effect so that they are the first “domino” in the chain of aid rather than a bystander to the emergency that unfolds before them. This experience not only impacted my life, and the lives of the teenagers in the car, but has the potential to impact an entire future generation through the integration of very basic and standard skills designed to overcome the bystander effect.
In the spring of 2018, I studied abroad at the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) in Brisbane, Australia. QUT is ranked first in Australia for Communication and Media Studies and is located in an extremely culture and history-rich city. Being a visitor in this country and a participant in its culture allowed me to engage with my previous studies of both journalism and anthropology from a global perspective. My own standards of what a culturally diverse and inclusive environment looks like shifted as I compared the results of the cultural preservation initiatives in my country to the results of the initiatives in Australia. I learned that cultural and historical resource preservationists can help minimize the divide between people of different backgrounds and encourage a national culture that is diverse and inclusive through a commitment to reconciliation, frequent and widespread reminders of indigenous influence, and consultations with tribal leaders. After graduation, I want to pursue a career in cultural resource management and use my journalism skills to further preservation and cultural inclusion initiatives. My study abroad experience served as a huge learning opportunity and an anchoring point for me as I witnessed first-hand how inclusive preservation initiatives can lead to meaningful change on both large and small scales.
Campus sustainability plans are widely used at institutions across the country as the framework for incorporating sustainability into institutional practices. At the University of South Carolina, we have not updated a master campus sustainability plan since 2015. As an intern in the Office of Sustainability, I set out to research and create an updated campus sustainability plan. At first, we researched other schools’ plans and brainstormed the sections we wanted to see in our plan, but we quickly realized that this task was too big for us to complete in one semester. After regrouping, we decided to assist with the Office’s Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS) to evaluate a smaller area of campus sustainability. We collected 265 data points about campus and public engagement initiatives related to sustainability. Then we analyzed the data to create recommendations to be used in a future campus sustainability plan, and the Office’s annual report. This process helped us improve our professionalism, teamwork, written and verbal communication, research skills, and project management.