

# INTERN WALL of FAME



## **Nolan Ahearn**

Social Work

Minors: Leadership Studies and Sociology

## **Junior Admissions Counselor**

SUNY Fredonia Admissions Office

We had the pleasure of meeting with Nolan and talking to him about his internship as a Junior Admissions Counselor with the SUNY Fredonia Admissions office. You can often find him strolling around campus with groups of prospective students trailing behind, his arms stretched out and pointing from feature to feature around campus. Being a student tour guide is an important responsibility and Nolan wonderfully outlined his duties for us.

One of the most important things that Nolan has learned during his experience as an intern at the Admissions office is the art of working with different and diverse populations. Part of being a Junior Counselor means spending a lot of time getting to know each of the tour guides. This includes their interests, quirks, intelligences, etc. Different students bring interesting and important experiences to each tour and Nolan's goal is to help design trainings to best bring out these traits in all the tour guides to make the campus tours special and interesting to prospective students.

Another skill that Nolan has developed as a Junior Counselor Intern is the art of persuasion. This simply means that part of the position includes finding ways to highlight aspects of the campus and community that make it marketable to different populations of prospective students. As a Social Work major, Nolan must learn how to work with different populations of people and how to convince his clients that they *are* making the right choice by seeking help from him. Getting to know the intrinsic motivations of different students, both tour guides and prospective students alike, are key to preparing for his future career.

One of Nolan's favorite aspects of the Junior Admissions Counselor position is how creative he is able to be in his daily work. There is no book to follow or set of written rules he must abide by when directing the tour guides, which lets him feel a sense of agency in his position.

When it comes to advice, Nolan has plenty to give! In terms of internships, he feels that it is important that you are not afraid to take risks and to break the mold. He explained to me that a lot of the time, the processes used today have been that way for a long time and could use some refreshing. Being an intern is a chance to give a fresh perspective to your employer and to hone your abilities. He also says that going forward through your schooling and interning; you should always trust your ability and make waves if you need to. When discussing advice for general students or prospective interns, Nolan would say that utilizing the Career Development Office is absolutely crucial. Based on how many people go to this college and need to complete an internship for their major or just to better their education, this office should be full all of the time! In the words of Nolan, himself, "What you know is important, but *who* you know is just as, if not more, important!"

We closed our interview with some words of advice from Nolan for Fredonia students: "Set a time where you close your textbooks, shut your laptop down, and get some rest. Time to recharge is so important for staying afloat in college! Also, make sure you are asking for feedback in your life. Being open to criticism is crucial for succeeding in the professional world, so why not start practicing that right now?"