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My Experience as an AOF Section Council Intern

By Bradford Connors

Throughout the past year, I've been very fortunate to have the opportunity to serve as a section council intern (SCI) for the Actuary of the Future (AOF) Section. Before learning about this internship opportunity, I was under the mistaken impression that the Society of Actuaries (SOA) existed simply to administer exams and offer certifications to actuaries. But after getting to witness some of the initiatives that the AOF Section takes to help young actuaries develop the tools necessary for a successful career—and realizing that the AOF is just one of 20 sections that SOA members can join—I now see the SOA in an entirely different light.

What made my experience as an SCI so valuable is that I was granted a lot of flexibility regarding what I wanted to work on. At Penn State, I am currently pursuing a dual degree in both actuarial science and broadcast journalism—a relatively rare combination that doesn't cross paths very often. However, as a member of the AOF council, I was able to participate in a project where I could utilize both of my skill sets as I co-conducted an interview that you'll find in this newsletter.

As a college student, I was very grateful that I had the chance to spend about an hour speaking to an actuary with highly extensive and diverse career experiences who has risen to a prominent role within his organization. To hear insight about the past, present and future of the industry from someone who has seen it evolve firsthand over the years is a learning opportunity that one simply cannot get from reading a textbook, and it was an experience made possible by being a part of the AOF Section Council.

Another project I worked on this year was to create a flier to market the AOF's networking bean bag toss event at the upcoming annual meeting. In addition, despite being the least experienced of the group in terms of real-world actuarial experience, we were able to pinpoint one area in which I—along with just about any other college student—may actually have the advantage over full-time workers: social media. I've made an effort to boost the AOF's presence on LinkedIn, and I hope that the next SCI(s) will take on a similar role in order to further increase interaction on the AOF's LinkedIn page.

Future AOF council interns may be involved in the same initiatives I was a part of, or their experience may be completely different from mine. That's the beauty of the internship; unlike a college class, there's no syllabus, no recurring assignments to hand in each week, and no grade on the line. You can make as much or as little of the internship as you wish, but if you try to make the most of it, I'm sure you'll find yourself with countless networking opportunities and a better understanding of the profession of which you are about to embark upon your career. ☆



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