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Backstage at dcp (dick clark productions)

One minute she's walking talent through the press line after a taping of *So You Think You Can Dance*, and the next she's hunting for pliers to free a model trapped in a wedding dress with a stuck zipper.

Such is the life of an intern, and Katie Paysinger '11 savored every moment of her summer experience with dick clark productions (dcp), a television production company in Los Angeles. dcp specializes in reality and award shows including the American Music Awards, New Year's Rocking Eve, Golden Globes, Academy of Country Music Awards, and *So You Think You Can Dance*.

As an intern in the production and communications departments, Paysinger's daily responsibilities varied. She tracked dcp press and compiled a daily clips package for employees, took part in creating pitches and trailers for new show ideas, adjusted microphones for the talent and coordinated clearance forms. She escorted reporters as they gathered sound bites for TV, radio, print or blogs.

"As viewers, we see the end product of those interviews, but it was neat to see behind-the-scenes, understand how it all comes together and to be a part of that," she said.

The eight-week experience gave Paysinger a feel for living and working in southern California, but also established contacts that will be invaluable as she pursues a career.

"It provided networking opportunities and let me see what the industry is all about," said Paysinger, who took part in weekly field trips and learned from representatives from area studios such as HBO, Dreamworks and Disney.

Paysinger has been bolstered by support from Linfield alumni as well. During her first week in L.A., she attended the annual Linfield Welcome to the Alumni event. She has also connected with alumni in the TV and film industry, among them Devon Lyon '98, director; Kevin Curry '02, director; Samantha Kuester '01, costume designer; Niki Hunter '05, TV editor; and Dave Szamet '03, producer.

"I went down there knowing zero people and within a week I knew 20," she said. "It's nice to have Linfield people in the same industry helping me grow my network."

Paysinger, one of 30 interns at dcp, said her experiential background from Linfield gave her a boost. As a student, she interned for Sotto Communication/Pantry Marketing+Design through Linfield's Kemper Program and worked as a research assistant with Lisa Weidman, assistant professor of mass communication. She also served as an intern at the *News-Register* newspaper and assisted Mary Stern, a Yamhill County commissioner.

"I've been interning in Yamhill County since I was 17 years old," she said. "Having that hands-on experience put me a step ahead."

Weidman said Paysinger's eagerness to take on multiple responsibilities set her apart from her peers.

"She was one of the most involved students I've known at Linfield," said Weidman, who received Paysinger's help on a study of the perceptions of Oregon wine. "She took advantage of everything Linfield had to offer. Not only that, but she's resourceful. She went out and got the dcp internship on her own."

Still, it's a big jump to move from a town of 2,500 (Dayton) to a city with more than 10 million (L.A.). Paysinger credits her travel experience with easing the transition – she went abroad three times while at Linfield.

Paysinger took full advantage of her summer environment.

"All aspects of that life draw me there," she said. "I'm passionate about working in television and on films. I'm optimistic and I've been putting a lot out there and I'm hoping it's going to come back to me."

In September, she loaded a moving van and drove 950 miles back to L.A. She has an apartment, a roommate, industry contacts and faith. A career is soon to follow. 🍷

– Laura Davis



Katie Paysinger, right, with Melanie Moore, winner of season eight "So You Think You Can Dance" at the premiere of "Glee: The 3D Movie."