

2024-2025

Student Employee Appreciation Digital Yearbook

Student Employment Services
Career Services
SUNY Cortland



SUNY Cortland celebrates student employees

The National Student Employment Association has designated April 13 to 19, 2025, the second full week in April, as National Student Employment Week.

Thank you to all students for the contributions you have made on campus this past year. Nominated honorees are noted in this digital yearbook, and following that, many students volunteered to be featured with spotlights. Congratulations to all!

2024-2025 student employee honorees

Mohammadreza Afkhami
Isabelle Anderson
Eliza Bernardo
Derek Bridges
Kayelah Brown
Adrianna Calangelo
Mackenzie Carroll
Angelo Centrone
Bernardina Cordes
Aydan Coughlin
Kaylee Cummings
Thomas Curty
Kennedy Davis
Julian deRoziere
Lexi Devlin
Emily Dimarino
Mary Doumbia
Adam Evans
Gianna Faggiano

Martin (Leo) Flyntz
Parker Gaboury
Ginger Gacio
Holly Gesin
Hannah Golden
Leah Grinnell
Adrianna Grzelakowski
Ziyang Guo
Cody James
Savina Jannetti
Fiona Joss
Jessica Kam
Jennifer Kelly
Emma Kelly
Tessa Kovalczik
Parker Kristoff
Madison Lauber
James Marino
Conor Mccooey
Samantha McKay

Cooper McMahon
Charles Miller
Ava Miranov
Keturah Mondezie
Ashley Nazario
Calistus Nwuzor
Riley O'Connor
Joshua Osa
Carlene Palmer
Mia Parise
Kaileigh Phillips
Autumn Pittman
Ellie Priscott
Valerie Reith
Julia Renwick
Kerry Rudden
Issiah Santos
Aimen Saqib
Tiana Schelble
Justin Schrom

Nuala Seabrook
Adrian Sierzega
Kortney Slavick
Josiah Soto
Jacqueline Stone
Marissa Stone
Kelly Tait
Giovanna Valeriano
Olivia Vangelov
Kylie Vienneau
David Vivar
Jose Voyard
Meghan Wehner
Lauren Wodzinski
Alexa Wolcott
Jacey Wolfe
Riley Wood
Asha Younas
Jason Zimmerman

Thank you to our nominators!

- Hugh Anderson, International Programs
- Daniella Baban Hurrle, International Programs
- Michael Bersani, President's Office
- Kimberly Boyce, Cortland Auxiliary Service
- Lawrence Brady, Sport Management
- Kyle Cannon, Campus Activities
- Raven Clessa, The Help Center
- Paige Crittela, Admissions
- Theresa Curtis, Biological Sciences
- Karen Dafoe, Library
- Andrea Davalos, Biological Sciences
- Peter Dawes, Campus Technology Services
- Kayla DeCoste, International Programs
- Allison D'Elia-Hall, Economics Department
- Karen Diescher, Child Care Center
- Carly DiPietro, Registrar's Office
- Abigail Droge, English
- Peter Ducey, Biological Sciences
- Dominick Fantacone, Research and Sponsored Programs
- Tasie Fox, Registrar's Office
- Adam Freed, Cortland Auxiliary Service
- William Gore, Information Resources/Library
- Scott Holdredge, Performing Arts
- Lisa Hotaling, The Learning Center
- Jennifer Jones, Physical Education
- Jaclyn Lawrence, Athletics
- Carolynn MacNay-Knight, Cortland Auxiliary Services
- Elliott Messmer, Campus Recreation
- Mary Kate Morris, Campus Activities
- Mecke Nagel, Philosophy
- Krista Natale, The Help Center
- Matt Nuesell, Campus Recreation
- Jenifer Phelan, Memorial Library
- Lauren Scagnelli, Health and Wellness Promotion
- Julie Simser, Geography and Philosophy Departments
- Wendy Sirvent, Residence Life and Housing
- DJ Spitale, Athletics
- John Suarez, Galpin Institute for Civic Engagement
- Megan Swing- Sustainability
- Tina Thomas, The Help Center
- Chris Widdall, School of Education
- Cassidy Williams, Registrar's Office
- Sandra Wohlleber, Campus Activities
- Jacob Wright, Career Services

Student spotlight – Mohammadreza Afkhami

Graduate Student, Exercise Science major

Mohammadreza was nominated by Lauren Scagnelli who said, “I nominate Reza in recognition of his outstanding dedication, leadership and service to the SUNY Cortland Cupboard. His commitment to address food insecurity and fostering a culture of care has made a lasting impact on the campus and students. Reza has gone above and beyond to ensure the Cupboard is a welcoming, well-organized and efficient resource. Reza helped to expand outreach, increase accessibility and make connections with donors. His leadership has resulted in a significant increase in usage. Due to Reza's connections, students felt comfortable to let him know there was a barrier to them accessing food. He worked with other stakeholders on campus to take away that barrier and ultimately create a mini Cupboard off-shoot. Beyond daily operations, Reza outreaches on social media, ensures a diverse and nutritious selection of food is available, and destigmatize food insecurity.”

On the experience, Reza said: “Working as graduate assistant for Cupboard, was a great experience to learn and practice how much students in campus need each other helps and we have to always act as a family to care about each others needs, especially this role which fought with food insecurity and hunger but also providing the students basic and necessary needs, did embrace more empathy and responsibility in me. This role showed me how consistency matters everyday toward serving the campus students, also to add working here showed me many people out there like staff, faculty members or parents have such a warm and great heart by donating to cupboard they showed how much they do care about love in the university! My supervisor is such a great person I learned responsibility working under pressure and be there to support no matter what from her, to me she is a true champion with a great heart.”



Student spotlight – Derek Bridges

Sophomore, Early Childhood and Childhood Education major

Derek was nominated by Karen Diescher who said, “Derek has shown such a growth in confidence in all of the Child Care Center classrooms. Staff across all age areas, comment that about how well he does in their classroom and that they enjoy having him participate in their classroom.”

On the experience, Derek said: “Working in the SUNY Cortland Child Care Center has given me the opportunity to bond with many children of different developmental stages and learn how to not only be seen as a teacher but as a friend. I have become familiar with each classroom as I keep ratios and help with lunch breaks, while also supervising how children learn day-to-day and what they struggle with at certain ages.”



Student spotlight – Adam Evans

Senior, Sport Management major

Adam was nominated by Jaclyn Lawrence in Athletics who said, “Adam reached out to me before becoming a Cortland student. As an incoming transfer from a junior college, he asked to meet with me to discuss ways in which he could help our department. We met during an Open House and I was immediately excited to have a student like Adam coming to Cortland. Adam has taken event practicum and was then hired on to simply fill in where needed. He has worked COUNTLESS games in various roles including scoreboard, game clock, shot clock, penalty box, judge assistant, ticket sales and scorebook. Adam is a jack of all trades when it comes to working athletic events. Since working for me, I introduced him to colleagues at OCC and Cornell and he is now working for both intuitions as well. Adam is always willing to help. He is someone that I have continually leaned on during busy weekends or over break and time and time again, he comes through. I will surely miss him when he graduates.”

On the experience, Adam said: “Through this position, I gained valuable skills such as interviewing, communication, multitasking, and a keen attention to detail. I also learned what it truly takes to perform at a high level in sports. This experience opened doors for me with Cornell, where I was offered opportunities with their event staff. Overall, this role has had a significant impact on both my personal and professional development.”



Student spotlight – Ginger Gacio

Sophomore, Business Economics major

Ginger was nominated by Matt Nuesell in Campus Recreation who said, “Ginger is in her first year as an intramural sports official and I think she's deserving of recognition for her efforts on behalf of our program. From the start, Ginger asked questions, went out of her way to improve her performance and showed genuine interest in being a contributing member of the staff. She has overcome obstacles and has transformed herself into a knowledgeable, trustworthy, and dependable member of our staff. I am incredibly proud of how far she has come and I don't have enough opportunities to share just how much she is valued by her supervisors for her attitude and efforts. “

On the experience, Ginger said: "My on-campus work as an intramural sports official helped me strengthen my communication and teamwork skills. Establishing strong relationships with coworkers and supervisors was essential for smoothly officiating games and ensuring effective coordination."



Student spotlight – Leah Grinnell

Sophomore, Community Health major

Leah was nominated by Wendy Sirvent in Residence Life and Housing who said, “Leah is a wonderful Student Assistant, and our office has enjoyed having Leah with us during this time. Leah has gone above and beyond with helping our staff with whatever tasks they may need, especially when tasked with purging a tremendous number of files over a few weeks.”

On the experience, Leah said: “Working at an on-campus job here at SUNY Cortland has taught me how to manage time efficiently and balance work and my academics, as well as problem-solving and communication skills through each task and different challenges. Also, it has given me real-world experience in an environment that was supportive and influenced my growth professionally.”



Student spotlight – Adrianna Grzelakowski

Sophomore, Business Economics major

Adrianna was nominated by Jacob Wright who said, “Adrianna is one of the most professional students I have ever worked with. From her first day in her internship, she has taken initiative to show up as her best self. Adrianna is always ready to work and is always looking for ways to go above and beyond expectations. She is kind to her peers and takes her role seriously, performing each task with pride and competence. Working with her is truly a privilege.”

On the experience, Adrianna said: “As a Career Peer Mentor at SUNY Cortland, I developed my communication and mentoring skills by helping students with their resumes and engaging with professionals to support career development initiatives.”



Student spotlight – Savina Jannetti

Junior, Musical Theater major

Savina was nominated by Scott Holdredge in Performing Arts, who said: “Savina has been a great asset to our scenic shop in the Department of Performing Arts. She is good at communicating her schedule and maintaining a work and education balance. She is a hard worker, dedicated and committed. She works hard and is open to learning new tasks without complaint. I know I can rely on her to see a job to completion with care and appreciation.”

On the experience, Savina said: “While working, I have learned several skills including such as safety precautions in a work environment that deals with power tools and sharp equipment. Because of this I also strengthened my observation skills. Working in the scene shop at Dowd has also helped me with my teamwork skills as when you are building set pieces you are rarely working by yourself. Because of this I have gained professional working experience in a field that works so adjacently to my career.”



Student spotlight – Keturah Mondezze

Senior, Political Science major

Keturah’s nominators said, “Keturah joined us in Fall 2024, when she took the Drivers position for Sophia's Garden volunteers. She split the position with another student and did the bulk of driving at all hours (early morning and afternoons, including Fridays). Never missed a day and took it upon herself to work with the Student Facilitators to encourage volunteers' professionalism, and assisted SFs when volunteers needed extra help, e.g., with asking philosophical questions/leading discussions with the children at Randall School and at various sites. Keturah is on time, courteous, communicates well with site supervisors, and anticipates challenges. For this reason, I asked Keturah to join as SF this semester, as well as being our First SF student supervisor, where she coordinates their logistics. There is a lot of diplomatic skill involved in troubleshooting, helping SFs be their best, and being encouraging. Keturah has the passion, commitment and care to do all this and more. Now, she's supervising the print making of T-shirt production at the Makerspace, which was not part of the original assignment.”

On the experience, Keturah said: “Through my on-campus work experience, I have developed strong leadership and communication skills by guiding discussions, mentoring volunteers, and adapting complex philosophical concepts for young learners. This role has also strengthened my critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, as I navigate engaging students in meaningful dialogue while fostering an inclusive and thought-provoking learning environment.



Student spotlight – Calistus Nwuzor

Junior, Healthcare Management major

Calistus was nominated by Jacob Wright who said, “Calistus’ commitment to his internship has made him stand out as an exceptional worker and leader. He is committed to his personal growth as he regularly seeks out opportunities that promote his personal, professional, and academic growth. He maintains consistent and clear communication with every project he completes. Any time I ask Cali to do something, he finds ways to excel beyond what was expected. I truly valued the opportunity I have had to work with him.”

On the experience, Calistus said: “On-campus work experience has subconsciously taught me the skill of adaptation. Learning how to adapt to different work environments, different tasks, and different people.”



Student spotlight – Carlene Palmer

Senior, Recreation Administration major

Carlene was nominated by Karen Dafoe in the Library, who said: “Carlene is an essential member of the Makerspace team and has had an incredible positive impact on the Makerspace. They consistently demonstrate professionalism, teamwork, and excellent communication skills. Whether on shift or not, they actively promote Makerspace resources, fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment for all who enter. Carlene goes above and beyond to provide outstanding customer service, always staying attentive to the needs of users. They willingly cover extra shifts and mentor new student workers, ensuring a smooth transition for all. Their prompt responses to emails and dedication to their work are a testament to their commitment and reliability. Carlene is truly a vital asset to our team and to the success of the Makerspace.”

On the experience, Carlene said: “In the Makerspace working under Karen Defoe has also been a pleasure. I love helping people create their projects, it's currently Big/Little season and we are packed. I get so much enjoyment from seeing creativity from my peers and helping bring their ideas to life. Working there I have really grown my active listening skills to really understand what the people want, and how I can help.”



Student spotlight – Aimen Saqib

Junior, Community Health major

Aimen was nominated by Lauren Scagnelli who said, “I nominate Aimen in recognition of her outstanding dedication, leadership and service to the Health and Wellness Promotion Office. Aimen has gone above and beyond to ensure the students know reliable health information in a fun and engaging manner. Aimen has gone out of her comfort zone to educate students on sensitive topics. I have seen a lot of growth in her confidence. I nominate Aimen for the Student Employee Recognition due to her commitment to health and wellness in making a difference in many lives.”

On the experience, Aimen said: "Through my role as a student employee, I've learned how to engage in meaningful conversations with students, especially about important health topics, in a confident, respectful, and approachable manner. This experience has strengthened my communication skills and helped me become a more empathetic listener, which I know will be valuable in my future career in public health."



Student spotlight – Tiana Schelble

First Year, International Studies major

Tiana was nominated by Megan Swing with the Sustainability Department who said, “Tiana was a truly fantastic Green Rep during the Fall 2024 semester. She truly "came out of the gates running" with so many fun and different ideas for programs and ways to get students involved. She is truly a leader and was looking for more ways to get involved.”

On the experience, Tiana said: “Both [jobs I’ve worked on campus] taught me new skills to be implemented in my everyday life. At the rock wall I learned determination, teamwork and work ethic. This job was honestly a dream come true as I love rock climbing but even more loved my coworkers who look forward to seeing again when I come back to Cortland. I truly couldn't wait to go to work and therefore picked up as many shifts as I could. Secondly, [as a Green Rep] I learned how to furtherly be environmentally conscious and how to integrate this within campus life. The misinformation and poor education on sustainability is one problem I am determined to fix. This job made me feel like I was doing good and making a difference in this world. Critical thinking and teamwork became a crucial part of my job. Not only did I need critical thinking when climbing myself but furthermore this skill is extremely necessary when having someone's life in your hands. By working with different employees each shift, I was able to understand and learn more about teamwork.”



Student spotlight – Justin Schrom

Graduate Student, Sport Management major

Justin was nominated by Lawrence Brady in the Sports Management Department who said, “Justin works closely with me as we seek to prepare students for life after college. Justin uses his undergraduate (SUNY Cortland) sport management degree to guide, promote, educate and lead our current group of seniors as they prepare for their capstone internship at the conclusion of their classroom work. Justin creates and updates our internship data base for the students to utilize as they seek an internship during their last semester on campus. Furthermore, he meets with each student to prepare and finalize their resumes, cover letters and mock interviews. He also mentors all students based on his experience as a graduate of the program and monitors their grades to make sure they are prepared to undertake the responsibility of securing an internship. Justin is a critical part of our department. Not only does he work with the internship students, he also supports the entire faculty and chair whenever needed.”

On the experience, Justin said: “I have learned so much from my position. I have further developed my skills as a leader as well my communication skills. It has been very rewarding meeting with undergraduate students weekly and help keep them stay on the right track while mentoring them as they start their career. I have been able to expand my professional network and be a part of a hiring committee. These last 10 months have been very rewarding and have set me up to succeed in the future.”



Student spotlight – Kortney Slavick

Junior, Early Childhood and Childhood Education major

Kortney was nominated by Karen Diescher who said, “Kortney is a team player who is willing to work hard and will go into any classroom with a smile on her face. The children look forward to seeing her each day.”

On the experience, Kortney said: “In my time in my job, I took on a long-term sub position. In that position I learned teamwork, leadership and communication. I had to create lesson plans for the students I was teaching that the other preschool teachers could use in their classrooms, too. One lesson I had to create was the Gingerbread man. This lesson was school wide, so I had to communicate what my classroom was doing to both parents and teachers, I also had to lead this lesson in front of 8 preschoolers.”



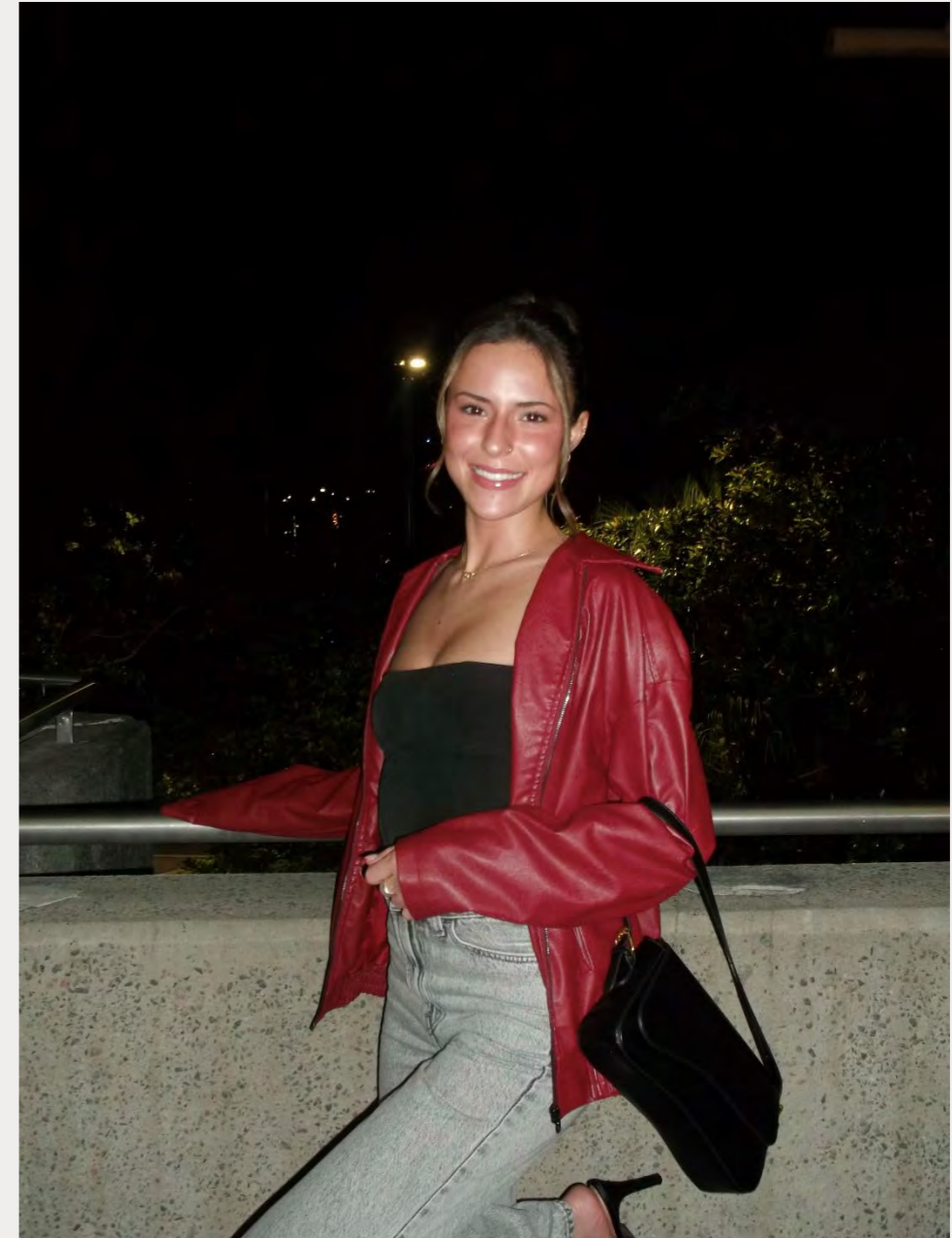
Student spotlight – Olivia Vangelov

Senior, Communication Studies major

Olivia was nominated by Kimberly Boyce who said, “Olivia has become a familiar and valued presence at the Campus Store, having been employed here for four years. She has thrived in her role, demonstrating exceptional reliability and trustworthiness. Olivia takes initiative in mentoring newer student employees, ensuring they understand their roles and expectations.

Beyond the store, I have had the pleasure of knowing Olivia personally through our shared involvement in our sorority, ASA. It has been inspiring to see the positive impact she has made within the chapter and how she has applied that leadership and experience to her internship with CAS Dining over the past two semesters. Olivia's dedication, adaptability, and commitment to excellence make her a truly deserving candidate for this nomination and I am very excited to see where life takes her after graduation.”

On the experience, Olivia said: “Working at the Campus Store has helped me develop communication, teamwork, and problem-solving skills that I’ll carry with me into any career. I’m grateful to be part of such a supportive environment where I’ve learned so much from the people around me.”



Student spotlight – Kylie Vienneau

Senior, Inclusive Childhood Education major

Kylie was nominated by Paige Crittela who said, “Kylie has always been one of the tour guides on the busiest days of visits. She is so positive, informative and a team player through and through. She cares about her quality of work and always communicates with me about any changes in her daily life that may affect her ability to work. She is a joy to have as a student worker and deserves to be recognized. “

On the experience, Kylie said: “Being a tour guide on campus for the past few years has been a wonderful experience. I get to work with others that share the same love for Cortland I have and meet new people with every tour! Being a tour guide has greatly improved my confidence in public speaking and has developed my teamwork skills further. I have also learned so much about Cortland that I would not have known if I never became a tour guide!”



Student spotlight – Meghan Wehner

Junior, Inclusive Childhood Education major

Meghan was nominated by William Gore and Jenifer Phelan who said, “Meghan, along with her fellow student assistant, Jacey Wolfe, approached the library staff with ideas on how to expand its social media presence. Showing great initiative and creativity, she goes above and beyond with her work and deeply cares for the success of the library.” and “Meghan has demonstrated creativity, leadership, and initiative by conceptualizing, launching and managing the Memorial Library TikTok account. Her engaging content has boosted student engagement, increased library awareness, and fostered a sense of community. Meghan's professionalism, teamwork, and communication skills have made a lasting impact on both the library and campus culture.”

On the experience, Meghan said: “During my employment on campus, I have developed skills in leadership and equity & inclusion, both of which are among the eight big career readiness competencies. Myself and another student employee help to manage the TikTok account for the library. We had to pitch our idea to librarians and come up with video ideas. We are leaders among our colleagues. I also have learned to think differently and approach ideas with an open mind. For example, I do not know how able-bodied a patron is, so I always tell them where the stairs and elevators are located. The skills I have learned during my on-campus job will translate to my full-time career.”



More student spotlights

Emily Dimarino – Junior, Sport Management major

“My job on campus has been an extremely rewarding opportunity. I love doing something that interests me, even though I'm not studying anything related to it. Everyone I have had the privilege to work with at the Library has been nothing short of kind and helpful. I am very thankful for all the opportunities given to me, especially the chance to advance at the library and become a Student Supervisor. I have learned a lot through my experiences at the library. I have improved my skills in interacting with patrons and problem-solving. I wasn't the most outgoing person when I started at the library. I was a little nervous at first, and it was somewhat out of my comfort zone. But now, I interact with patrons without any issues at all, which has helped me in many aspects of my academic experience at Cortland.”

Hannah Golden– Senior, Psychology major

“My internship with SUNY Cortland’s Health Promotion Office gave me the opportunity to support our students in making healthy, safe, and informed decisions about their personal health and well-being. I loved being part of a team that works together to help foster a healthier campus community. Working with an amazing team of PEER educators and mentors has been a great way to grow my leadership skills and become involved with promoting student wellness on campus.”

Jessica Kam– Sophomore, Criminology major

“Working on-campus at the Technology Help Center has helped strengthen my communication and teamwork skills through directly working with faculty/staff and other students. Additionally, it has improved my problem-solving and quick-thinking skills, as I am consistently working with others to provide support. My technology skills have also greatly improved through this job, as I have had the opportunity to learn new programs and improve my knowledge and efficiency when using technology.”

More student spotlights

Riley O'Connor – Senior, Sport Management major

“From my on-campus work experience at the Campus Store and Package Services, I have learned several of the big 8 career readiness competencies. This job helped me to further develop my communication and critical thinking skills. Additionally, I am able to work in fast-paced, high demanding environments while adding to my customer service experience. By working closely with my coworkers, I have expanded my skills in being a good leader while helping train new hires and an overall good teammate.”

Jaqueline Stone – Senior, Speech and Hearing Science major

“I have loved my time working as an admissions intern for the last year. I have used organization skills to manage 70+ tour guide availabilities and create weekly schedules for daily visitations and high school bus trips. Working with so many people daily has allowed me to collaborate and create stronger bonds with coworkers. I have learned more about thinking critically when situations do not go as planned and keeping constant communication for things to work out. This admissions job has been a great experience showing my Red Dragon Pride to current and potential students.”

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