

McGowin Ey  
Executive Summary  
LaForce + Stevens Public Relations

Establishing, Creating and Maintaining Relationships:  
LaForce + Stevens Public Relations

This past summer I had the amazingly unique opportunity to work at LaForce & Stevens, a public relations firm in the heart of Manhattan in New York City. Through various Sewanee connections, I was able to work as a summer intern through the company's highly developed and competitive intern program. As a part of the Hospitality Team, a group of thirteen young and energetic women, I became familiar with a wide variety of clients and customers that included everything from liquor brands to hotel properties to high end clothing lines.

One of the main purposes of the LaForce & Stevens intern program is to make sure the interns have tasks that expose each intern thoroughly to the world of public relations. My daily tasks included managing sample requests, conducting mailings to potential and current clients, composing research for new business proposals, working at red carpet events and compiling media lists for upcoming events. In such a competitive and fast-paced industry, most days were chaotic but educational and exciting nonetheless.

Perhaps the most valuable aspect of my internship was the quality of information offered by the employees at L + S. Throughout the summer, myself and fifteen other interns attended seminars and discussions lead by the heads of the company and other guest speakers; seminars titled "Red Carpet Etiquette 101", "What's Newsworthy?" and "The Calendar" among others. Further than just these seminars, at the end of the summer, the interns were asked to present a new fall/winter pitch/strategy to the entire company that offered services from various clients from different divisions of the firm.

As an art history major at Sewanee, I was, at first, intimidated by public relations, an industry which I knew relatively little about. I quickly found that a liberal arts education is prized, if not preferred, in public relations; an education that teaches how to read, write, and perhaps most importantly understand and relate to people and the world around them. I discovered that public relations is an industry that thrives on maintaining relationships with clients, with the media and with the public. My experience this summer at LaForce & Stevens taught me about the public relations industry, the "real world", and how much my Sewanee education has to offer it. I can safely say that my internship was challenging, demanding, but ultimately extremely rewarding.