



Samantha Olson

Chief Operating Officer, Deputy Editor
Shifter Magazine

Samantha Olson says her dream as a journalist has always been to “give a voice to the voiceless and maybe attend the Met Gala” while she’s at it. As chief operating officer and deputy editor at Shifter Magazine, Olson has certainly accomplished her goal of highlighting unheard voices by upholding Shifter’s mission of being a “collective space for fellow queer folks, black, indigenous and people of color, outcasts, freaks, fashion lovers, and rule-breakers.”

When founder Victor Martinez-Rivera needed a right hand to launch Shifter, Olson was the obvious choice. Anyone would be hard-pressed to find a 22-year-old with more talent, ambition and experience than Olson. She recently graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in journalism, a minor in creative writing and a certificate in editing and publishing from University of Central Florida. But did she stop there? As Cher Horowitz, Olson’s favorite movie character, would say — “As if!”

Olson wrote and edited for six different publications while earning her degree. Her experience as an editorial intern for Orlando Weekly and as editor-in-chief of Centric Magazine prepared her for the responsibility and technical aspects of running Shifter. Writing for Her Campus at UCF allowed Olson to do what she loves most: write about pop culture, award shows and her personal inspiration, Lady Gaga. She also helps Seventeen Magazine keep up with all things “Gen Z” as an editorial fellow.

Olson’s favorite part of her multifaceted role is running Shifter Fest. This on-going project showcases up-and-coming performance artists including musicians, drag performers, visual artists and more. Human connection is at the center of Shifter’s mission, and Shifter Fest allows Olson to cultivate relationships by connecting these artists with new fans.

Olson is particularly proud of the personal essay she wrote for Shifter, “How I Became the It-Girl of My Own Life.” And with a true “it-girl” like Olson as chief operating officer, the sky’s the limit for a unique media platform like Shifter. Her charisma, nerve and talent paired with her signature wit are bound to score Olson an invitation to cover the Met Gala for Shifter sometime soon.