

Grace Owens

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Capstone Reflection

Throughout my time at The Washington Center, I was fortunate enough to gain a plethora of invaluable insight into my future. The experience was truly transformative, providing me with a unique set of skills and knowledge that I could not have acquired elsewhere. The program's various aspects allowed me to explore a wide range of opportunities and connect with individuals who were previously out of reach or not even considered. The TWC was instrumental in helping me distinguish between my work and personal life, identify my ideal workplace, and recognize fields that align with my interests. I am grateful for the experience and will carry the lessons I learned with me throughout my career.

As a participant in the TWC program, I found it challenging to maintain a healthy work-life balance. In the past, I tended to take work home with me to meet deadlines or impress my supervisors. This habit often resulted in my personal life taking a backseat to my professional responsibilities. During my hybrid internship, I experienced difficulties in disconnecting from work, even during off-hours. This was partly due to my poor time-management skills but also because of the pressure I put on myself to always be available and responsive.

Another issue I had was oversharing with colleagues and family members about both work and personal issues. I would vent to my coworkers about conflicts I was having with colleagues who were not fulfilling their duties or problems I had with my managers. I also shared personal problems, such as family arguments and private family matters, which may have been

inappropriate to discuss in a professional setting. Looking back, I realize that I did not have appropriate boundaries in place and that my oversharing may have impacted my relationships with coworkers and family members alike.

When I first began my new internship, I made it my priority to make a positive impression on my colleagues. Subsequently, I found myself remaining silent and only speaking when necessary. However, after attending the Career Readiness Program event on Working Collaboratively in a Hybrid Workspace, I came to the realization that it was imperative to establish boundaries between my work and personal life.

To begin with, I implemented the practice of leaving work at the office, ensuring that I powered off my computer at the end of each workday. This allowed me to disconnect from work and focus on my personal life. Additionally, I worked on enhancing my time management skills, ensuring that I was efficient during my work hours, which prevented me from having to work after hours.

Lastly, I made a conscious effort to keep my personal matters separate from my work-related matters. This allowed me to be more present and focused on my work tasks and prevented me from getting distracted by personal issues. Overall, these changes have positively impacted my work-life balance and have allowed me to be more productive and efficient in both my personal and professional life.

Throughout my time interning at The Washington Center, I had the opportunity to gain invaluable insight into what my ideal work environment looks like. My internship was set up as a hybrid arrangement, meaning that I only had to be physically present at the office for one day per week for a few weeks. While I appreciated having my own workspace during this time, I came to the realization that I was seeking a better work-life balance. This realization led me to explore

the idea of working in a true hybrid setting- balancing both remote and in-person work- or even a fully remote or entirely in-person work environment.

It was during an informational interview with Kim Ratcliff, a news anchor at WECT, where I was given some sage advice. She suggested that I should aim to find a job that aligns with my desired lifestyle. This advice resonated with me, and I have been keeping it in mind as I continue to explore potential job opportunities. I am confident that I will find a work environment that allows me to thrive both personally and professionally.

During this informational interview, I also came to the realization that while my time in D.C. has been an incredible learning experience, it is not a place where I wish to reside long-term. Additionally, I have discovered that I prefer living in more remote areas as opposed to bustling cities. Growing up in smaller towns and secluded areas has influenced my preference. Although D.C. has provided me with numerous opportunities and experiences, the big city lifestyle is not for me.

Through my experience with The Washington Center, I discovered which career fields align with my interests. This realization came from my internship and a subsequent informational interview. As a production assistant intern for PBS's "To the Contrary," I worked on creating content that addressed social and political issues affecting women, children, and marginalized groups. This experience helped me discover my passion for production. However, I hope to work for a company in the entertainment industry in my future career.

During my time at PBS's "To the Contrary," I realized that I have a knack for marketing. This realization came when I served as the social media manager during my internship and had to create engaging posts to attract viewers to our weekly episodes. I am currently exploring job opportunities with Disney and considering the possibility of working on the true crime show

'Dateline.' Additionally, I discovered a passion for the fields of news anchoring and public affairs during my time at The Washington Center. My interest in these areas was already present before I began my program. However, after speaking with Kim Ratcliff and Joseph Dellavedova, the Director of Communications at BUMED, my love for these fields grew even more.

I am incredibly grateful to The Washington Center for the invaluable lessons I gained about myself and my future career path. Through the Academic Internship Program, I learned how to establish healthy boundaries between my personal and professional life, identify the work environment that best suits me, and pinpoint the ideal career fields for my future. This experience will remain with me for years to come.