

INTERNSHIP SPOTLIGHT

Rachel O'Neill

Graduation Semester & Year: Spring 2024

Semester & Year of Internship: Summer 2023

Major: Criminal Justice & Management

Minor: N/A

Hobbies: Dog walking

Campus Activities: Executive positions for: Student Government Association (SGA), Gender & Sexuality Alliance (GSA), and Phi Eta Sigma

Future Plans/Career Goals: I plan to work with a federal criminal justice agency after graduation.

Hometown:

South Park, PA



- **Internship (company/your title):**

Re-Entry Intern/Offender Aid & Restoration (OAR)

- **How did you find your internship?**

I went to The Washington Center for a seminar in January with a class, and then continued to apply to The Washington Center's internship program.

- **What were your duties?**

I worked one on one with recently incarcerated individuals to determine their specific needs and how we could help them in their journey to re-enter society. I also worked to research and build the new guidelines for creating a liberation space.

- **How many hours per week were you at your internship site?**

35-40

- **What did you enjoy most about your internship?**

This is a small non-profit that makes a huge impact on a very large area. With how small it is, the community between the collective members showed me how important things like wellness in the workplace are to make the most efficient environment to work in.

- **What was the most difficult aspect of the internship?**

It was hard to separate my personal feelings from the job. A lot of individuals I worked with were in very tough situations such as lacking housing or suffering from substance use disorder, and I had trouble not getting too emotionally involved, since OAR only can help each individual with so much.

- **How did your experience at UPG and in the Criminal Justice Department prepare you for your internship?**

Pitt-Greensburg as a whole is very focused on DEI which was extremely important at my internship. My major also prepared me because I had a lot of knowledge on the criminal justice system before I started which helped me to follow along with the participant's situations legally.

(cont.)

- **How has your internship prepared you for a career?**

It has introduced me to what the professional workforce is like in terms of the importance of communication and thoroughness for every area.

- **What recommendations do you have for other students about doing an internship?**

I recommend keeping an open mind when going into an internship. Don't be afraid to ask questions or to try and work on projects that you may not have expected to have a strong interest in, you never know what might spark your skills and interest.

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