



## Thank you for your support



### Andrew (AJ) Rojek *Coca-Cola Company Scholar*

“If it were not for this scholarship, I wouldn’t have been able to attend The Washington Center. My parents raised six children, thus expenses can be strained at times. When I learned of this opportunity and told my mother, she was hesitant to say the least. After explaining the benefits, she yielded on one condition: I must pay for it completely on my own. I grew dismayed for I did not have \$10,000 dollars in my back pocket. But, thanks to your contribution and others like yours, I was able to take part in this amazing experience. I am truly blessed and I thank you.”

#### **Choosing The Washington Center**

“I chose to attend The Washington Center because I wanted to explore new opportunities and get a broader experience in the communications field. I come from the University of Mount Union which is a small school out of Alliance, Ohio. While I’m blessed to attend, Mount Union unfortunately is a small school with an even smaller communications program, with a total of six professors in the department. Needless to say I wasn’t experiencing the full realm of the communications field working at my school radio station. One day I met with my career counselor, Sara Fugett, expressing my concerns about my career path. I mentioned The Washington Center and after a lengthy conversation, I knew that this was an opportunity I wanted to pursue. I had doubts about my career so I looked to The Washington Center to expand my horizons, which it has. I am grateful that I got to spend my summer at the Washington Center.”

#### **My greatest learning experience at my internship**

“My internship at VIVA Creative has been an interesting experience. As an intern I’ve been a fly on the wall, but at times my input was welcomed. The biggest thing I learned is that in this field you must have multiple skill sets. You must be a part of all areas of communications/production/media to truly understand it and to contribute best. I had a conversation with a director/producer who told me that if I wanted to do what he did, then to not simply grant myself the title of producer. He explained that you have to know all areas of the field in order to gain your crew’s respect. Don’t tell your cameraman to “do his thing,” but actively take part, know how to film, edit and light etc. in order to become the best producer. I also learned that even though I’m the “creative department,” that there is more to it. You must understand your client, understand what parameters and limitations there are and then go from there. I truly have learned so much at my internship.”

### **How civic engagement influenced my sense of social responsibility to the community**

“My civic engagement project has given me a newfound appreciation for our veterans and what they’ve done for our country. It’s sad to learn that they struggle even after they are discharged. Veterans can struggle from post-traumatic stress disorder or neglect. The recent VA hospital scandal is a perfect example of this. My grandpa served in the Air Force, so this topic is a personal one. During an educational portion of my project, the group watched a TEDTalks video discussing veterans and trauma. We learned that one of the biggest struggles for veterans when returning home is the loss of brotherhood. When thrown back into “the real world” those bonds are strained and this causes veterans great distress. This civic engagement project has influenced me greatly; I believe that we must take action. I think it’s important that we do preserve those bonds so struggling veterans don’t feel lost.”



### **How my academic course enhanced my TWC experience**

“My academic course, Media and the Movies, is another realm of communications that I was able to explore. This course introduced me to journalism and more importantly, journalism ethics. As a class, we discuss movies that portray journalists and what ethical questions the movie provokes. For example, that movie All the Presidents Men, which followed Woodward and Burnstein as they brought down Nixon after Watergate, brought up the issue of anonymous sources and the grounds for using them. State of Play invoked questions of journalist relationships and objectivity as the protagonist journalist is torn between protecting his congressman friend and unveiling the truth. This course has challenged me to think critically about journalism

ethics. This experience will help me navigate that “gray area” that every writer encounters, should I choose to pursue that field.”



### **How my TWC experience shaped my personal and professional goals**

“The Washington Center has challenged me to not limit myself in what I study. After learning all that it has to offer, I need to expand my skill set and gather more experience in order to make it in this field. I think back to what that producer told me, how I must not grant myself a title or role but envelop myself in everything. I once went to a video shoot and was dumbfounded; despite my training and coursework, I couldn’t even begin to understand the process. For example, I watched as this intricate camera gear was set up, which I never learned at Mount Union. I felt small, but then I realized that this just means that I have much more to learn. This realization has taught me to pursue more than what’s in the classroom. I plan to explore more of my field, and also personally attempt to contribute to it in some way.”