

1. Describe your objectives in applying to this program, and explain what you hope to gain from your experience in Washington as well as what unique qualities or skills you bring to an internship sponsor. Please discuss internships that you would be interested in, emphasizing type rather than a specific organization.
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My idea of Washington D.C. was always associated to the feeling of hope and opportunity. It is where “things get done” and laws are passed in an effort to make the United States of America the best version of itself. The possibility for a perpetual better tomorrow can always be attainable, and that beautiful idea lights my passion for objective journalism—the basis of freedom in America—and seeking the truth. D.C., of course, is our nation’s capital and the hub for my “American Dream.”

I am a Schreyer Honors student majoring in broadcast journalism with a minor in English. My objective in applying for the Stanley E. Degler Washington D.C. program is essentially to gain more real-world experience in journalism and to use that experience to become a better journalist. I want to obtain more knowledge on pertinent issues our country is facing, and I am interested in both studying and working in a fast-paced environment. A dream of mine is to become a politics reporter, and I would love to gain experience and learn more about politics in journalism in the heart of government and politics.

Political issues and the government are something that I have always been interested in and passionate about. I believe the Washington D.C. program is a tremendous opportunity to potentially become assigned to cover major news events, meet influential people, and gain confidence and connections that will further help me in my future journalism career.

As a sophomore, I have much experience in a newsroom in both print and broadcast journalism. In the beginning of my freshman year, I applied to The Daily Collegian, Penn State’s student-produced newspaper and website. My first article I wrote was about Justice Brett

Kavanaugh's confirmation to the Supreme Court, and women on campus weighed in on that very controversial issue.

I remember being very eager to interview many female professors and students to ask them about their feelings toward Kavanaugh's confirmation, after Christine Blasey Ford's sexual assault accusations led to a hearing in regard to his Supreme Court nomination. The reason I chose to write that story was because I wanted Penn State women to really speak their voice on this issue—an issue that brought forth much awareness for sexual assault, and an issue that was controlled by so many men. I believe a very important aspect of journalism is its ability to let regular citizens' voices be heard for even national issues, and to objectively keep the government “in-check.”

One year later, I am still reporting for The Daily Collegian. I have been the State College community and borough reporter, a books reporter, a THON and Greek Life reporter, and now I currently am on the arts and lifestyle staff, highlighting the abundance of art in State College. In addition to reporting for The Daily Collegian, I have also been a news anchor for PSN-TV, and this year I am currently a field reporter.

This past summer, I obtained an internship at my local newspaper, the Times Leader, in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. I was fortunate to cover the topics of police, courts and crime—all issues that spark my interest. On August 12, 2019, Wilkes-Barre's local Planned Parenthood office was vandalized. Many assumed it was a hate crime, as glass doors were smashed, a bible verse—“Blessed are those who mourn Matt. 5:4”—was painted in red and a fire was attempted. As my co-reporter Ed Lewis and I stood behind the crime scene, and as broken glass crunched beneath my shoes, I knew at that particular moment how important journalism is to our society, and how important our story would be later that day.

It was disheartening to see a hateful crime happen so close to where I grew up and currently live, and it was eye-opening to see that, unfortunately, hateful acts happen every day all around the world. Citizens of my town needed to be urgently informed about the vandalism, so they could become more aware of hateful crimes that happen right in our backyard, and so their safety could also be protected.

From my experiences with The Daily Collegian, PSN-News and the Times Leader, I learned an abundant amount of skills that I use every day. I learned the importance of ethics and integrity, especially when reporting on the Planned Parenthood vandalism. I had many opinions and feelings of anger and frustration while observing and writing about the crime. However, reporting objectively and fairly was more important than letting my personal feelings seep through. The community needed to know the facts, not my opinion.

I have gained expert communication skills, as I have enjoyably interviewed many sources to write in-depth stories. Interviewing for me is not always just asking questions and expecting an answer. Instead, it is a conversation between me and a person to gain more knowledge on the individual's life and experiences to be able to share that with the community of readers or viewers. Everyone has a story or something important that needs to be said and should be heard.

I have also gained many technical skills, such as the usage of social media to my benefit for receiving immediate news, learning how to operate a camera while field reporting and controlling and reading from a teleprompter. These skills, among many others, have fueled confidence and courage within me for future reporting.

By applying for the Washington D.C. program, I hope to obtain an internship in broadcast or print journalism where I can expand my skills I have already gained and to learn

more in the realm of journalism and politics. There is always room for improvement. I would be interested in working for any news outlet in Washington D.C.

Journalism is as important as ever, especially with an attack on the profession in the “fake news era.” It is important for young journalism students who wish to become a political reporter, like myself, to study in Washington D.C., where the atmosphere of political reporting is shifting, as we have also entered into a new era of politics where social media and digital journalism has a large influence. Journalists are not only supposed to be the “voice” of the people and keep the government in-check in the most objective way, but journalists are also supposed to provide the people with information that will let them make their own decisions about their lives, the society and the government.

Working in Washington D.C. has always been a dream of mine, and the experience will be very beneficial to me and my future career in journalism. I would absorb all of the resources the city has to offer.

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2. Submit a short writing sample from a course you have taken recently.

Daily Collegian article: 4-26-2019

'We need to be a little more aggressive in protecting what we have': Penn State assistant dean talks Borough Council campaign

By: Anjelica Singer

Deanna Behring announced her candidacy via Twitter on International Woman's Day for a seat on the State College Borough Council — which was a very fitting day for the basis of her campaign.

Behring is the assistant dean and director of international programs for the College of Agricultural Sciences. She and her family welcomed State College and said goodbye to her previous home of Washington, D.C. in 2000 to start an international program with the goal of taking a global perspective “of all things agriculture” at Penn State and started the entire program “from scratch.”

In Washington D.C., Behring worked for the Central Intelligence Agency and the Department of Commerce, and also worked on projects for the U.S. Trade Representative and the U.S. Agency for International Development.

At Penn State, Behring developed research and student programs, as well as outreach programs for grades K-12 and the community to learn more about the broad topics of what agriculture is in the global sense. The outcome of her new programs was of much success.

“When I came to Penn State, we had half of 1% of students in agriculture studying abroad,” Behring said. “Students need to know the forces that are shaping the global food system, and we made it a goal to have an international opportunity in every major in the college. This past year, according to the new student exit survey, we got that percentage to .5% to 24%.”

With Behring's position leading the College of Agriculture's growth in international research and educational programs, many may wonder why she would run for State College Borough Council.

Her desire to run goes back to the year 2000, when Behring's second daughter was born. She wanted to find a community that was safe for her two daughters, yet a community that also challenged them. She sought out State College.

“We have a major research institution that attracts talent from all of the world to come here, but we also have a beautiful community and access to outdoors,” Behring said. “I have one daughter who loves theater, so she had great experiences in the community here, because of the resources and talent that come here to State College and to Penn State. My youngest daughter is into horses, and we can be out riding horses within 10 minutes after we leave campus. It is a unique place.”

In the past few years, Behring said many women have encouraged her to run for borough council, and — especially since 2016 — understood the importance of women in politics. In addition to having experience in the federal government and choosing to raise her family in State College, Behring knew running for State College Borough Council was something she wanted to do.

“We need strong local governments because I know my faith in the federal system is a little bit shaky, and the uncertainty of what is going to happen at the federal level leaves me to be concerned about strong government at the local level,” Behring said. “We live in a great place, and I am not running because I think State College has something horribly wrong.”

“I am running because we need to be a little more aggressive in protecting what we have, and we need to be a little bit better at communicating how we work and how we engage a range of voices. We need to be more transparent on how that work gets done, and my goal is to be a little bit more of that force.”

Behring’s force to implement her envisioned programs dates back to her time working for the CIA. She took on many challenges, including being asked to lead the charge to implement the U.S. sanctions against the Yugoslavian wage of civil war in Serbian-Montenegro.

Behring made sure that the sanctions the United States had placed on Serbian-Montenegro were working by using every single intelligence apparatus at her disposal.

The policy she was in charge of did indeed work, and U.S. troops were not sent in.

Behring was also a part of the first ever historical exchange between the CIA and Russia's KGB, the former main security agency for the Soviet Union until 1991. She and two other people were chosen to share information about what they knew about Serbian-Montenegro with the KGB, and then reported back to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

She then was asked to attend an interview at the White House Office of Science and Technology and Policy to write a series of six strategical papers.

She was hired on the spot.

The six papers were about how to engage with key countries of geopolitical importance and how to use the United States' science and technology partnerships to achieve political goals.

Behring not only wrote those six papers, but ended up being the head of delegation to former Vice President Al Gore to implement the policies she created.

"Because I have a lot of experience in the federal government," she said. "Running programs there, running programs here, starting programs from scratch in the White House on behalf of the vice president of the United States, Al Gore, and implementing them—I did the same thing here at Penn State. I envisioned programs and I implemented them."

There is, however, a consistent theme throughout all of Behring's experiences: public service. While working for her bachelor's degree at Albion College in Michigan, she attended the Gerald Ford Institute for Public Service.

It was there where Behring went through a program that emphasized philosophy, ethics, government and political systems.

“My whole career has been about service, whether it was service to the federal government, service to the people of the United States, service to Penn State and the Penn State students, and now I’m looking at service to the residents of State College,” Behring said. “This notion of service to communities to which I am part of is the thread that ties that all together for me.”

She also said her career has also been dedicated to achieving broader goals and giving to the community.

“I think one of my strengths is to facilitate conversations,” Behring said, “to make sure everyone is included in conversations, and to move things forward in a way where everyone feels like they contributed to a successful outcome.”

Kurtis Miller, a student who minored in international agricultures and graduated in 2018, recently wrote a letter to the Centre Daily Times in favor of Behring running for State College Borough Council.

Miller worked both directly and indirectly with Behring, as she served as an informal mentor for him when he was applying for graduate school.

“I have seen Dr. Behring’s total support for the student body of Penn State as a faculty member and I think she would excel [in the borough council], but also benefit the community as a whole if she were to be an elected official representing the community of State College at large,” Miller told The Daily Collegian. “She would also represent the demographic of State College, which is a huge proportion of Penn State students.”

Sarah Fusco, a graduate student intern who worked with Behring in the Office of International Programs, said working with Behring was unlike any other previous job she ever had, because Behring inspired her to take her previous skills and knowledge to enact change and reform.

“When I found out Dr. Behring was running for the borough council, I could not think of a better candidate,” Fusco said via email. “I think the community of State College stands to benefit greatly from her experience as well as her compassion. She truly cares about the borough and has its best interest in mind.”

Behring said she is in a unique position that many other borough council members do not have.

She not only built programs for the students at Penn State and listened to their needs, but has also listened to the community needs of young families because she helped grow a young family here, and listened to the community needs of longtime residents of State College because she is one, too.

“I think because of her close relationship with the student body in her position, she is going to come at issues always understanding the impact they have on the student, as well as constituents of State College,” Miller said. “Because she has also been a community member herself and she understands the greater community body that she represents.”

Pushing her limits and herself “outside of the box” is something that Behring tends to do quite often.

As she was creating the international program from scratch and raising two children, Behring also studied and got her Ph.D. in multicultural communications in 2015 at Penn State.

She also speaks Chinese and French, and not just because those languages are spoken in many parts of the world. Behring challenged herself to learn them so that, once again, she was pushing herself “outside of the box.”

“When I first came here to start the program, I came up with something called International Programs: Beyond the Borders,” Behring said. “I want students to always push the borders that they created for themselves.”

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Story from the course COMM260W:

By ANJELICA SINGER  
Comm 260W Writer

UNIVERSITY PARK — Some Penn State students have strong opinions about the recent House impeachment inquiry into President Donald Trump.

According to the Washington Post, the inquiry was officially announced by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi on Sept. 24.

The impeachment inquiry was prompted by a Washington Post report that alleged President Trump asked the Ukrainian president to investigate Trump's political rival, Joe Biden and his son, Hunter Biden.

According to student Connor Griffin (sophomore – broadcast journalism), the impeachment inquiry and the whistleblower report just adds more controversy surrounding the president.

“There are plenty of instances in the past where there were allegations made about Trump, and then they just fizzle out,” Griffin said. “I think that is part of Donald Trump's ability to steer people's views from issues at hand.”

Griffin said he is not quick to pick a side however, and he cannot decide whether President Trump is guilty of the offenses or not.

“I think in this era of politics, everyone has an agenda,” Griffin said. “The Democrats have had an agenda to try to kick Trump out of the office for quite some time now, and Donald Trump obviously has his own agenda to always make his image look better.”

According to the Washington Post, even if President Trump becomes impeached, the Republican Senate can still hold a trial to determine if whether Trump should be removed or not. Impeachment only means that Congress thinks the president is no longer fit to serve and should be removed from office.

Vaishnavi Nara (sophomore - biology) said she learned about the impeachment inquiry from President Trump's tweets regarding the allegations on the social media site Twitter.

“I totally believe he has committed these crimes because in the 2016 election there were rumors that he conspired with Putin, and I totally believe he also did that,” Nara said. “I

would like to see him become removed from the office, because I think some embarrassment would do him some good.”

Like Nara, Alexandra Palacios (sophomore – broadcast journalism) said she also believes President Trump is guilty of the allegations made against him. Palacios said she felt like the impeachment inquiry was a long time coming.

“The evidence is all there in black and white and if he is not removed from office, I will be very disappointed in our government,” Palacios said.

However, even though Palacios said the evidence against President Trump is “black and white,” Palacios also said she is not sure if the president will actually become removed.

“Politics gets so sticky sometimes, so it’s hard to tell what is going to happen next,” Palacios said.

Unlike Nara and Palacios, Alexandra Anton (sophomore – finance) said she believes President Trump is innocent and the phone call with the Ukrainian president was only a congratulatory call.

“President Trump ran on a campaign of seeking out and ending corruption in this country,” Anton said. “Trump wanted to know if there was any corruption involved with Biden’s son, who took over a position in a foreign company when he had no prior experience.”

Anton said she does not want President Trump to be impeached, but she does not think he will be removed from office if the truth prevails.

“The Democrats have been dishonest, corrupt, and on a witch-hunt since Trump was elected,” Anton said. “I think this will fall apart just like the two-year Russian collusion investigation.”

Leigha Montes (junior – English) said she wants President Trump to be impeached, but she is concerned about the timing of the impeachment inquiry.

“I think we are not going to figure out a definitive answer until after the 2020 presidential cycle is wrapped up,” Montes said. “I feel as if the impeachment process is going to take a longer time than anticipated, and there’s only about a year left of his presidency.”

The impeachment process is normally long, according to the Washington Post. Only two presidents, Andrew Johnson and Bill Clinton, have been formally impeached. However, many presidents have been threatened with impeachment, and now President Trump is one of them.

“The best way that I have heard a president described is to be ‘the pilot of an airplane,’” Griffin said. “You never want there to be this sudden turnover in that important

position. I hope whatever happens, it is done properly and does not put our nation in jeopardy.”