

THE CORINTHIAN COLUMN

STONEHILL COLLEGE MU OMEGA CHAPTER

OF BETA ALPHA PSI NEWSLETTER

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Reaching for the Top

By Victoria Mello '16

The Mu Omega Chapter of Beta Alpha Psi at Stonehill College has once again started the year off strong. Having inducted 18 members and introduced 15 new candidates, our chapter continues to grow and gain recognition both on and off campus.

We have built upon our past successes and worked to differentiate ourselves as a top chapter in the nation. This past spring, we sent six students to Washington, DC to participate in two of the three Best Practices Competition categories. Our International Impact team outlined our chapter's efforts to engage members and candidates in enhancing their global outlooks through Study Abroad opportunities. Our Financial Literacy team shared our Chapter's success in orchestrating a Personal Finance Seminar targeted at preparing seniors for real life financial challenges after graduation. Both teams strongly represented Stonehill, with the *Financial Literacy* team finishing 3rd in a pool of 11 teams and *International Impact* earning the top spot in a pool of 4 teams. As a result of its first place finish, our *International Impact* team progressed onto the National Competition in Milwaukee, WI. Though the team did not earn a top National ranking, our Chapter is very proud of their effort.

While our past activities and successes have distinguished Mu Omega as a Superior Chapter for two consecutive years, our chapter aims to continually challenge ourselves with new events and projects in the coming year. So far this semester, our chapter has taken advantage of unique professional and community service activities including an interactive lesson in conflict management from the *Actors from the London Stage* and the *Making Strides Boston Breast Cancer Walk*. We look forward to extending our efforts throughout the year to come!

This newsletter also highlights a number of the professional opportunities that helps our college distinguish itself – internships and leadership programs. Freshman and sophomores interested in being an accounting major should find the articles very informative as the pathway to being a professional in the accounting field comes to accounting majors much faster than other disciplines here at Stonehill.



Beta Alpha Psi is a non-profit honorary and service organization for accounting and financial information students of AACSB- or EQUIS-accredited colleges and universities. The primary objective of Beta Alpha Psi is to encourage and give recognition to scholastic and professional excellence in the business information field.



Experiences



Big Responsibilities at a Smaller Firm

By Olivia Binfield '17

In November 2014, an accounting professor here at Stonehill approached me and asked if I might be interested in a two-year internship with the financial services firm of Sharkansky LLP. As a then sophomore, I was a bit overwhelmed with the prospects the opportunity offered. Nonetheless, in December I found myself sitting across the table from a manager from Sharkansky asking what my schedule looked like for the upcoming semester. Needless to say, I accepted the internship offer and started work in January. Remembering I had a very limited accounting education left me a bit anxious. More specifically, I had taken just two classes – financial and managerial accounting. But I embraced the opportunity nonetheless.

Sharkansky is a “smaller accounting firm” by industry standards with 44 employees and is located a quarter of a mile outside of Stonehill’s campus in Brockton. The company tailors to tax, accounting, auditing and advisory needs of clients. Even as an intern, I am able to dip my feet in each one of these departments or services depending on the task.

As it was my first internship, as well as my first professional work experience, I was expecting to stand by the copier or go on coffee runs for the semester. However, quite the opposite happened. In my first month, I was thrown into assisting in the preparation of tax returns. This was partly because it was “busy season” but also believe the company had faith in my ability to learn quickly.

My favorite part about working for Sharkansky is that it enabled me to get to know and build good professional relationships with many people. This includes some partners at the firm. Something I am told is almost unheard of at any of the “Big Four”. I am able to ask simple questions and get sophisticated answers from any of the employees. Another nice thing I like about being a part of the firm is that I know exactly who is reviewing my work, which enables me to get direct feedback, thus helping me when completing projects. Lately, I have been working more independently helped by my experience, training and feedback and continued education in the field at Stonehill.

Sharkansky has been a very valuable learning experience during my time at Stonehill. I have gained an immense amount of knowledge that I would not have expected going into the internship as a sophomore. It has helped me apply my classroom work to the real world, which makes sitting in the classroom much more interesting.



Sharkansky LLP

CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

Benefits of Interning with a “Mid-Sized” Accounting Firm

By Hannah Poist '16

This summer I had an audit internship with a mid-sized regional accounting firm -- BlumShapiro. Working at what industry considers a mid-sized public accounting firm comes with many benefits that frankly I was not expecting going into my internship. Each week I had the opportunity to work with different audit teams for clients in a variety of industries. I assisted in the audit of multiple non-profit organizations, schools, cities, etc. and learned the similarities and differences from auditing one client to another. Being able to work on different components of the audit was helpful and contributed to my experience and knowledge. Working on preliminary tasks and final fieldwork really helped me to see and understand the bigger picture of the overall audit. Having the opportunity to complete parts of the audit solely on my own gave me the confidence and understanding of what it would be like to be on an audit staff for this firm after graduation. Interviewing and working with the clients firsthand was a great experience in seeing how accounting is not just based on numbers. Communication and knowledge is essential with this career path as working with clients and the other members on your audit team happens every single day on the job. Because of the size of the firm I interned with, I worked on audit teams as large as nine people to as small as three. I worked with audit staff, managers, supervisors and partners while out at the client. I was able to learn about and put into perspective their career experiences at the firm. Seeing how different levels of the firm work collaboratively to complete an audit and meet the needs of the client showed me how it is truly a team effort. Having the benefit of interning with a “mid-sized” firm gave me a high amount of exposure to different clients in a short amount of time. Working on over ten different clients this summer really helped me focus and think about my passion for particular industries as well as considering which paths I will take throughout my public accounting career!



BlumShapiro

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Hey Freshman and Sophomores! Leadership Programs are a Great Way to Start Early

By Kimberly Purisky 17'

This past summer I was fortunate enough to participate in PwC's *Elevate* program. *Elevate* is a competitive leadership program that allows students from many different colleges to spend two days learning about the firm and what working there entails. The program took place at the Seaport Hotel in Boston, a short walk from PwC's beautiful new office building in upcoming East Boston seaport district. This program consisted of listening to speakers talking about their experiences working for the firm, fun team-building activities, networking, and an awesome surprise trip to Fenway Park.

When we first arrived, we were placed into teams that we remained a part of throughout the program. We had a program leader, an employee who was in our shoes not too long ago. We got to know the leaders very well and could ask questions we were afraid to volunteer in front of the large group. They also lead us through "team programs", bonding experiences where we worked on team-building skills. For one of the activities, all of the teams were given bike parts, and were told to compete against the other teams and build the bicycle. This turned out to be a task that no one in our group was familiar with, but we all worked to figure out how to complete the task quickly and efficiently. We were forced to rely on each other to do our respective tasks, and if we couldn't figure it out, we worked together as a team to do so.

Besides the fun team-building activities, the company also provided speakers from both the tax and assurance departments at PwC. As someone that did not know a lot about the different accounting careers, this information was extremely helpful to assist in my decision on which department I might ultimately like to be apart.. The presentations consisted of a panel of employees and a host that would ask them a variety of questions. They were very open and straightforward on what it was like to work for PwC, and didn't leave out the long hours that the job often entails. Despite this, their experiences and stories were very positive, and got me really excited about someday working alongside them at the firm.

This two-day program was one of the highlights of my summer, and I would definitely recommend all accounting majors to look into this opportunity. I applied and interviewed during the spring semester of my sophomore year, while many students in my class were unaware of the program. Grades are definitively important, however, the recruiters are also interested in how involved you are, so having extra-curricular activities are important. All of the Big Four accounting firms have leadership programs like this, and it is a wonderful opportunity to meet many employees from the firm. And because of the program, I was fortunate enough to be offered an internship for the following summer in 2016. Now, I have contacts with some of the employees as well as other students who also accepted an internship with them, so when the first day rolls around I will not be as nervous.

Building Essential Skills

“A Night of Improv”

By Kayla Hanish '16



When the students of the Mu Omega chapter of Beta Alpha Psi were told we would be participating in an interactive improvisation night with the touring Shakespeare group “Actors From the London Stage”, many of us had confused looks on our faces. As accounting majors, the majority of us are used to quietly remaining in the background completing our work, studying for tests, and the like. However, it was clear that many students felt apprehensive about having to act in front of other peers, something most of us were not used to doing.

The event was planned as a unique opportunity for the chapter to offer its members and candidates a professional activity that would also satisfy the mandatory essential skill requirement for the chapter as we build toward submission for Superior Chapter recognition for the third straight year.

Although it may seem as though business and the world of theater are on opposite ends of the career spectrum, we quickly learned from visiting actor Chris Donnelly how the two worlds can be combined. Donnelly had all of the BAP members and candidates spread out across the room as we completed silly warm-up exercises that involved plenty of ridiculous noises and body movements. This was an excellent way to calm our nerves. Nonetheless, when the night began, it seemed as though the principles of acting had little to do with the world of accounting.

Despite our apprehension, we quickly learned how wrong we were about this assumption. Donnelly had two students, myself and Thomas Grant of the class of 2016, participate in a mock office setting. We were nervous about doing improvisation in front of our fellow students, but proceeded to play out a scenario in which I, a timid employee, needed to retrieve important paperwork from a stubborn superior, played by Tom. Donnelly walked us through the scene a number of times, asking the audience about our silent body language and looking for ways to enhance the scene. On-lookers were quick to pick up on signals ranging from a frightened lack of confidence to an overpowering control of the room. We repeatedly acted out the scene until I was able to deal with the negotiation in a way in which the superior, Tom, was unoffended while still getting my message across.

In this way, Donnelly was able to teach us about varying personality types we may stumble across in our careers as well as how to react spontaneously in situations we may not have much control over. Knowing how to communicate with different types of people, as well as having confident negotiating skills, is an important part of this career path that may be easily overlooked during our studies. Aside from the strict guidelines, numbers, and calculations often thought of when considering accounting, interactions with others should be seen as an equally important part of the job. Doing this well takes some skill and experience to conquer. BAP's "Night of Improv" was successful. In a very unique way, the evening reminded students of this vital career aspect, as well as providing plenty of laughs for all who attended.

Our special thanks to the troop of the "Actors from the London Stage", a special program sponsored by the University of Notre Dame. If you are interested in learning more about the program, please see: <http://shakespeare.nd.edu/actors-from-the-london-stage/>.



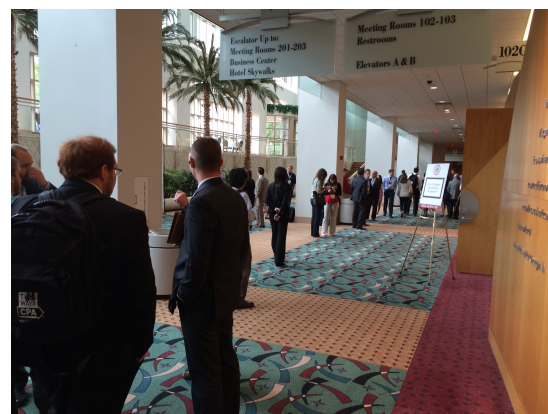
BAP Regional and Annual Meetings A Time For Learning and Fun

By Michael Mullen, CFA, CAIA - Chapter Advisor

As faculty advisor for the Mu Omega chapter over the past five years, attendance for me at both the regional and annual meetings of Beta Alpha Psi has been meaningful and inspiring and something that is often hard to translate for new candidates and the members who, for one reason or another, do not take advantage of the opportunity. This year's attendance at the annual meeting in Milwaukee, WI was especially meaningful for two reasons. First it was the chapter's first attempt to compete at a national level for Best Practices. We won the Atlantic Coast Region presentation in March, needed to qualify for Nationals. Despite a great effort, the competition was tough and we came up short of our goal – first place of course. But it was the experience that mattered, especially for the three students that put in a solid effort – Will Husic, Will Brosnan and Kate Morneault. And second, I was deeply honored to receive the BAP Faculty Advisor of The Year award. Nominated by our students and chosen by the National BAP committee, the honor touched me deeply as a teacher and advisor for the great students in accounting that we have here at Stonehill College. I also viewed it as a great opportunity to “wave the flag” for Stonehill and its accomplished accounting program.

And while there is a lot that goes into participating at the regional and annual BAP meetings, we encourage students to do their best to contribute and have fun at the same time. Whether it is participating in Community Services Day to promote literacy, a meal out with the students at some place more interesting than the cafeteria at Stonehill, meeting other chapters and hanging out together in the evenings or other such chance events. We do try to make the most of the experience, especially if it is a new city for participating students. This year we took advantage of discount baseball tickets and attended a Brewer's game, a first time for all apparently. But it wasn't so much the event, but rather the opportunity to put college demands behind us for a little while and “just chill”.

Attendance at the annual meeting exceeds 1,200 students, professors and professionals – it is an incredible event pulling from the 300+ BAP chapters worldwide. We extend our thanks to the BAP Executive Leadership and the BAP Professional Partners for their time and commitment to these unique student events.





Mu Omega Chapter of Stonehill College

Executive Committee

Victoria Mello '16 Megan McDonald '16 Kathryn Merrill '16
Hannah Poist '16 James Murphy '16 Whitney Wemett '16

Newsletter Committee

Editors – Hannah Poist '16 Kayla Hanish '16

Contributors – Victoria Mello '16 Hannah Poist '16 Kayla Hanish '16
Olivia Binfield '17 Kimberly Purisky '17

To learn more about our Mu Omega Chapter: www.stonehillbap.org

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