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December 19, 2013

Communications students create internship opportunity

KOKOMO, Ind. — An internship at Ronald McDonald House leads Kelli Martin to choose a career in non-profit event planning.

Now, she and two of her classmates help provide the same kind of opportunity for future Indiana University Kokomo students, developing an internship opportunity with Exodus Refugee Immigration.

Martin, from Carmel, worked with fellow communication arts students Carol Freeman, Kokomo, and Hannah Brewster, Burlington, to plan the internship, for their senior seminar capstone project.

“Through my internship, I discovered a passion for non profits, and for event planning,” Martin said. “Hopefully with this internship, someone else will have that same opportunity.”

They chose Exodus Refugee Immigration, based in Indianapolis, after helping collect donations for the group with their cross-cultural communications class. The non-profit welcomes refugees to Indiana, working with them to arrange housing, food and clothing, as well as education and employment opportunities.

“Once we saw what they do, we wanted to help,” Freeman said. “They help so many people who are escaping their countries because they fear for their lives.”

The organization has offered internships for students interested in refugee resettlement in the past, but a communications internship is something new, according to Jessica Kroymann, volunteer coordinator.

“It is a great opportunity, not only for Exodus, but for those who are passionate about human rights and non-profits,” she said. “The opportunity offers hands on experience of being an advocate for refugees and human rights in central Indiana.”

IU Kokomo interns will assist with event planning and fund raising, among other jobs, Freeman said, adding that she and her co-planners will not benefit from the internship they developed.

“This was never intended for us,” she said. “We want to do something for other students, to gain the experience we have had.”

Martin has kept in touch with mentors from her internship at Ronald McDonald House, and can use them as references when she applies for jobs after graduating. It was a valuable part of her IU Kokomo experience, she said.

“When you apply for a job, employers will likely choose the person with experience over the person with a degree, but no experience,” she said. “Internships give us the experience that can lead to jobs later.”

For more information, contact Martin at km80@iuk.edu.

Indiana University Kokomo serves north central Indiana.

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