

Communications Graduate Interned at ESPN, Managed Student Radio Station

by Edmund Frazier Myer

John Reichel, 22 year-old Cowlitz tribal member, graduated with honors from the Edward R. Murrow College of Communication in May.

Reichel graduated with a specialization in journalism and media production. During his time on campus, he hosted a radio show on KUGR Cougar College Radio, and served as the general manager of the station for the 2016-17 school year.

As general manager, Reichel was in charge of "keeping the ship afloat" by making sure all of the shows were in line, and doing all of the daily duties such as the budget for the station and scheduling events.

He did an internship with 710 ESPN in Seattle last summer, where he learned first-hand how professional broadcasters operate. And in doing so, he said he learned how to be a better sports journalist and reporter.

Reichel learned how to edit sound, upload podcasts onto their website, and networked with many professionals in the top-15 market. He also felt like he picked up better leadership skills from seeing how things were managed at ESPN.

Reichel said that this year as general manager of a student-radio station he was "trying to keep KUGR to the same standards that I was kept to when I was at my internship."

Reichel said he managed his busy schedule by "taking it one week at a time."

He said that he tried not to get overwhelmed about his grind as a senior and serving in a key role at the radio station. In addition to being heavily involved with KUGR, he focused on keeping his grades up to ensure that he would graduate, and be prepared for the next stage of his life.

Reichel has had up and downs throughout his four years of college. In one instance, he had his car broken into and everything was stolen, even his laptop with all of his important files.

"Remind yourself that this kind of stuff happens. This is not the end," Reichel advised. "This is just a bump in the road."

He described his growth at college as "humbling."

"Before I came here, I was in my own kind of world, my own kind of bubble," Reichel said. "But once I came here, I started talking with people with all sorts of different lifestyles."

Reichel said that having the opportunity to meet people from different places of the country, and even from different parts of the world has expanded his knowledge of the world.

"I am by no means all knowing, but I like to think that I've matured in my world view," Reichel said.

Part of that expansion of knowledge he gained was through the Native Center, where Reichel both learned and taught others about the Native culture.

He heard about the WSU Tribal Nation Building Leadership program when he was still in high school, and he looked into what it offered. He said he found interest in the fact that the program helps build stronger student leaders.

"The people who have been running the Tribal Liaison office have all been really awesome people," Reichel said.

Reichel said that everyone involved with the programs were really understanding and helped him through his "bumps in the road."

He said he felt like everything the Native Programs had done, such as Friday Feeds, helped him make it through college, and had made him "feel like a part of one big family."

Reichel is currently applying for jobs, and would eventually like to do production at a radio station. He hopes to produce his own radio show and is looking into many different stations. After working for a while in the industry, he may go back to school.



John Reichel, Cowlitz, received his degree in communications in May.

His advice to all students, even those who still have their senior year ahead of them, is to take advantage of their time at the university. He encourages that the students use their time as undergraduates to gain as much experience in whatever possible.

"WSU provides the experience you really need for a baseline to be able to grow," Reichel said.

He credits his ability to get the internship with 710 ESPN to his experience with KUGR.

Reichel said he wouldn't feel as "comfortable and confident in my abilities," had he chosen to not dedicate his time to getting involved.

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