

Interning with Reclamation

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KIRSTEN STROUGH: I work for the Media Services department at the Bureau of Reclamation and was hired as part of the Student Educational Employment Program, now called the Pathways Program. In college I studied film and television production, and while a lot of my classmates held degree-unrelated jobs, I got to actually work in my field while still going to school.

Now that I've graduated, I'm working full-time in a job where I get to use my degree. Most of the people I graduated with either can't find full-time work or are stuck working some random job just so they can pay their bills.

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With Reclamation, I work under the Regional Photographer and Media Specialist performing tasks all the way from taking official employee photos, to managing the photo archive, to even filming and editing video. I worked on a documentary for the construction of Grand Coulee Dam, which is going to play at their visitors' center, and it's just been such an amazing experience to work with such old, historic footage.

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I also got to create a video on some 72,000-year-old mammoth tracks that were found on a Reclamation project site in southeastern Idaho, and I had thought about majoring in anthropology there for a while, so it was kind of awesome to be there. I was pretty excited!

I also fulfill various media requests for both the public and from within Reclamation, for example, pulling a certain photo or video for somebody or even just checking out audio/visual equipment to other Reclamation employees.

Sometimes I even get to go out into the field. Filming.... Taking photos....

I'm seeing things I never thought I'd see. We even recorded fish surgery. They were doing a Bull Trout population study on Arrowrock Reservoir, so we actually got to go film them tagging the fish.

I feel so incredibly lucky to be one of the few graduates in my program to just jump right out of school and into a career. And I'm really looking forward to all the future experiences I'm going to gain through working with Reclamation and with the Federal Government.