

Episode 48 - Sharise Kent

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SPEAKERS

Moira McCullough, Sharise Kent



Moira McCullough 00:01

Welcome to the College Scoops podcast. I'm your host, Moira McCullough and today we are talking with Sharise Kent, who has coached guided and motivated students helping them to transition from college to career. You really can be intentional about your entire approach to your education by laying out a roadmap for yourself to follow both academically as well as internship wise. And so if you plot and plan, you can graduate in four years, you can do multiple internships, and you can leave with the skills necessary to catapult you into a career. This is the College Scoops podcast and I'm your host Moira McCullough, we focus on everything college related from the admissions process to where to eat, stay and explore on and round campuses. Our guests include founders, educators, authors and experts in the college space. Join us as these experts share their knowledge, experiences and lessons learned to help you have stress free, informative and tasty college journeys. Whether it's your first or last child going to college, or you're just interested in going to a college town for a game or meal, we've got you covered. If you haven't already, please subscribe to the College Scoops podcast to get the inside scoop on everything college related and leave us a review. And thanks to all of our sponsors partners in the entire College Scoops Ambassador team for helping us bring valuable content to our community. If you would like to support college scoops as a sponsor, please head over to patreon@patreon.com/collegescoops and sign up as a sustaining listener, insider or Deluxe sponsor. We have exclusive benefits for our members free ebooks and even a College Scoops care package. Sharise Kent has been motivating guiding and coaching millennials to academic and career success for over 20 years as the previous

Senior Manager for a National College internship program. she oversaw the placement of over 400 interns with major companies including AMC Networks, CBS, ESPN, HBO, the National Basketball Association NBC Universal Viacom Media networks and many others. In less than five years under her leadership, the internship program grew by over 50%. Sharise is on a mission to educate and empower the millennial generation to take charge of their careers, finances and futures so they are equipped to become generous givers that can impact the world. Her blog Internship Manual is not just about helping students do college successfully but the discovery and pursuit of passion and purpose. Over the course of her career, Sharise has worked as a college admissions professional on the undergraduate and graduate levels at seven institutions in New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia. She holds a BS in public relations from the State University of New York at Oswego and an MS and professional writing from Towson University. Sharise resides in upstate New York with her husband and their two children. Welcome to the college scoops podcast series for so happy that you have taken time out of your Friday to join us today and share some of your insights and expertise with us.



Sharise Kent 03:12

Thanks for having me. Happy to be here.



Moira McCullough 03:13

Well, we were talking with our college interns and many of the Student Ambassadors that we have on the College Scoops team and a lot of things right now, a lot of topics on students minds are you know, transition from college to career, and especially given what's just gone on in the past six months, so many college students were disappointed and lost some of their opportunities. So we'd love to have you share some guidance and expertise for students. But first off, can you just introduce yourself and share a little bit about who you are?



Sharise Kent 03:43

Yeah, my name is Sharise Kent and I am author of the internship manual a step-by-step guide to finding that internship of your dreams. I've been in the Higher Ed space for about 20 years working in college admissions and then and career development. And presently just continuing to provide students with information about internships via my blog, the Internship Manual, or Sharise Kent.com. And so happy to have a conversation to provide some insight into this internship world and this transition from college student to work professional today.

M Moira McCullough 04:13

You're gonna have to come back on, as you mentioned, you've worked in academia and in admissions and you have your blog and book that you've published. What are some of the tips for college students as they navigate their college experience in terms of course selection and you and I kind of talked about that trying to be intentional throughout your college career and really get the experience that you need. Plus with on hands internship opportunities,

S Sharise Kent 04:40

Definitely I think one of the things that I like to preach to students is you know, four years right they are student after you graduate in about five years. Some students are on six year plan, but you really can be intentional about your entire approach to your education by laying out a roadmap for yourself to follow both academically as well as internship wise and so if you plot and plan you can graduate For years, you can do multiple internships. And you can leave with the skills necessary to catapult you into a career. And so when you're looking at your courses, and you're looking at the opportunities that are available, first and foremost, you want to make sure you're taking all good general general education requirements, you're doing it in a timeframe that allows you to meet enough credit hours, a lot of students don't do the simple math, you need to take 12 credit hours, you need financial aid, right, that's a full time student, but you're going to need to take 15 to 18 in order to graduate on time for most four year schools that are on a semester program. And so when you're laying that out, and let's just say for example, you want to go into marketing as a career. Obviously, you can take your courses in marketing, but if you think you want to work in marketing for consumer product goods, right, maybe you want to take a course in economics to understand how the economy impacts what people buy, and when they buy. Or maybe you want to take a course in data analytics, so that you can really understand how to work through information. So that that is what is driving your marketing campaigns. It's not just about what's in my major, but also stepping outside of your major sometimes to integrate other courses, especially in this technology day and age. learn to code. Great learn about analytics, learn software like Tableau and R and Python if you can, or software like Adobe Photoshop, or InDesign, learn these other social media skills that go beyond just posting for your friends. But how do you manipulate video, take a video editing class, you can really get creative and implement some other things into your education that can allow you to stand out, especially if you have a liberal arts major that may not be very tech heavy, or have a lot of other courses. So I think when you look at your four year experience, when you look at your electives to be skillful, you know foreign language is still another class that you can add on to your your repertoire, learning another language you think he wouldn't go

abroad or whether or not you want to go abroad, just this multicultural, diverse world that we live in, you can add to your marketability, and as well as your cultural development by taking a foreign language class, even if it's not required. So I think when you look at your courses, when you look at your curriculum, what you look at, when you look at academically what's required of you, you couldn't really be skillful, especially for coming from a liberal arts major that may not have some other components. And on the flip side, if you're an engineering major, you know, take some of these other classes that are going to diversify you. In the event you decide you want to move into more of a management type of role rather than just the hardcore functionality of being an engineer.

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Moira McCullough 07:38

Well, I love the focus that you had and touching on the liberal arts because I was a liberal arts major if you learn how to think, you know, write, communicate, but I totally appreciate the fact that trying to integrate some of the skill sets that are required, and you touch on a lot, we have several inches on the college scoops and I love it when they're talking about you know how to use Adobe, or working with video production. It's so important in today's world, and you said it perfectly, like take some of the stuff that we're doing on social media and apply it to like real life, believe it or not, you already know how to do it. It's fun. Now apply it to a job.

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Sharise Kent 08:14

Exactly, exactly. When you look at its companies, we look at politics, when you look at companies, when we have all of these different places in which media intersects. You have to be able to have the skills to be able to market to market a product market or service market a client. And ultimately being able to learn those skills while you're still a student. While you're still studying for your degree in whatever subject area, you can really enhance your ability to have a profile that says not only can I do this, but I know how to do this. Everyone knows how to use social media. Not everyone knows how to run a Facebook ad. Not everyone knows how to read the metrics. Not everyone knows what it means. What does it mean to convert somebody not everybody knows what a funnel is? Right? So there's a lot of concepts that get behind social media that students are not aware of savvy and using it. But how do you turn that Tik Tock? How do you turn that Snapchat? How do you turn that Instagram account into something that's profitable for either yourself or for a company and that's a skill set that companies recognize younger people have, and they bring it to the table. But they want to combine that with some numbers and some metrics and some, some some technology behind that. And so I think it's just it's a part of the world that we live in companies are not shying away from it. It doesn't mean that everybody has to go be a social media creator. But it does mean that

being savvy in that area can potentially allow you to make yourself a little bit more marketable, depending upon the size of the company or the department that you're working in. That might be something that they're lacking, and that could be the differentiating factor between you and another candidate.

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Moira McCullough 09:50

Absolutely. And I think what you've just said to his students do this all the time, but they don't realize that it's a valuable skill set. They can't make that transition from Oh, it's just a hobby. You know, it's something that is marketable, and what you're kind of I bet in your position and what you help students with is enlighten them to the fact that no, this is actually a marketable skill. I know in the college scripts world, when I sit down with my internship team, I'm like, what's it tick tock? How do you put together a Facebook ad? I mean, these are all things that for somebody like myself, it's just I didn't learn that. And these guys do it all the time. And it comes intuitively to them. So they can just sit down there and help companies hit the ground running, when they don't realize that.

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Sharise Kent 10:36

Yes and where some students are really going to be overthinking and understand there's a difference between doing it just for fun and doing it with an implication that has money behind it, right. But there's also the understanding, and a popular thing that's happening now is the science behind it. The data behind you everybody feels as though Facebook and these other social media accounts are watching you, right? Well, well, how do they know what you're saying? How do they know what to throw at you in an advertisement? You say you search one day for mattresses, and the next thing, you know, you got every mattress in the world popping up? How does that happen? That's something that you can discover through some of the coursework that you're in the algorithms that are written, if you're getting into the tech side, as an engineer, maybe take a coding class, again, there's so many ways in which you can enhance your your profile, I was a liberal arts student have a bachelor's degree in public relations and a master's degree in professional writing. What do you do with that? Right? I mean, I guess I read books, but But beyond that, you don't have to look at your major as the only conduit into where you want to go. And I think for me, that's where internships really come into play. It's being savvy about your core selection, and choosing some things that allow you to get outside of your major, I took courses in marketing, I took a economics, you know, I kind of got outside of that comfort zone. But again, being a liberal arts major, you can also enhance yourself through those internships. And I say every student, if possible, should try to do at least for one every summer, right or Summer, Fall spring, I did eight, you know, it's possible, you can get it

done. And I have students who've done Tinder, and you can do it if you're savvy about how you create your schedule, and getting out there and putting yourself out there for those opportunities. So here, you can be a history major, but ended up starting a career in finance, right? How do you do that? How do you say I have a degree in history, but I'm working in finance? Well, maybe you took some finance courses as a minor. But maybe you got that first internship as a freshman year with somebody who just introduced you to some finance principles at a smaller company. And then you continue to parlay that into larger experiences. For a lot of companies, they are not super, super heavy, specifically on the major that you'd have to have. It's about presenting yourself as a strong candidate with a well rounded skill set. With involvement. Sometimes the GPA is a factor. So not every internship says you have to be this major, they're going to teach you what they want to know, they want to see that you're teachable. They want to see that you're coachable. They want to see that you can interact with others, they want to see these things. But from a content standpoint, they're going to give you the roadmap to do the jobs that they want to do their way. Now again, if you want to be a doctor, you got to have to do some things related to research in the scientific areas. If you want to be an engineer, I hope you take engineering because I don't want a bridge to fall when I'm driving by it. So outside of the STEM fields, and I think sometimes there's opportunity for students to parlay themselves into a lot of different careers, using the internship as a conduit to open doors to business. So yes, you can major in sociology, and but in work in a business environment, if you can demonstrate Yep, I have this business skill set, although I chose to major in this area, because I wanted to personally enhance who I was, and I enjoyed it.

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Moira McCullough 13:49

So then how do you help and guide students to do that? Because sometimes in our mindset, you know, students years passed, it was junior year, it was sophomore year. And what you're saying is, oh my gosh, you had an opportunity where you're saying, if you can try to get one every summer, you might even be able to get one throughout your school semester. Tell us how you help students do that? Or what are your recommendations and tips for how to even find them.

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Sharise Kent 14:13

It's one of those things that if you know, like, hey, I want to do an internship as a freshman, you're probably not going to get the \$25 an hour internship at certain companies, right? You can sometimes start where you are. And so I kind of go through it in my book a lot. And it kind of Chronicles those internships that I did. The end of my freshman year, I just had a natural curiosity. And I figured as an intern, you get to hop jobs every six to eight months and stay there for about three months, right? When you become a working

professional. That's not a good look, right? You don't want to leave jobs every two months, right? So it's take the approach that being an intern and being a student allows you to freely test drive careers and test drive jobs. So don't look at it as this job, this internship has to turn into a job, look at it as an opportunity. It's almost like a learning experience. That's not it may lead to a job. But it's really about, as you say, I learned as much about what I wanted to do professionally, on the job doing the job, as well as just being in the environment. For much of my career, I've traveled, like almost all the time until I started a family that it was a little bit more hectic, because I couldn't sit in the office all day every day. But for some people, that internship opportunity is the chance to discover that you really don't like sitting in an office all day. And maybe you want to be a landscape artists, right? or do something that is a little bit more physical. So first, I think it's the approach in the mindset of not looking at an internship as only this thing that has to lead to employment. But looking at this as a period of exploration for yourself, that period to really figure out the things that you enjoy the things that you hate, you may have thought that you wanted to be a writer, but then you realize you have to write on deadlines, right? Maybe that's not your thing. So maybe that type of writing doesn't work for you, you may have thought you wanted to work in finance, and then you realize, you know, all financial advisor and finance are two different things, right financial advisor, you can be given advice, and you get a call 100 people to try and get five, please schedule some meetings, and you can discover is not what I thought maybe I want to be a financial blogger, you know, so it's a process of learning, and not just looking at it of how much you know, can I make in this internship, although that is important. And will this internship turn into job by the time you get to that senior year, it is much more about that. But if you've kind of had that exploratory exploratory period, in the first three or four internships, when you get to that senior year, yet you're looking for the internship that's going to land a job opportunity based on the experiences that you've acquired. So I recommend starting with with your school, you know, you should have a Career Services Office, although most students don't discover it until their senior year and it's January, they don't have a job, find it go to it. Very often, their college careers in the fall or the spring, life has changed. And now a lot of them are virtual. There's on campus recruitment activities, they're not only there sometimes to hire full time employees very often they're there to look for interns as well. So start with your career services office is free. When you graduate, you have to pay a career coach, you have to pay somebody money to assist you with this process, or you have to beg, borrow and steal your parents to do so don't wait for that. Use these free resources on your campus. Everybody has them, right. Even things like interviewing, resume preparation. I remember when I was at college, we do etiquette dinner, you don't eat with the forks and you go out in, right. So use those resources and get started by going there. So because you're going to need a resume, and you're going to need to understand and learn how to interview and they will be a resource for that. And then professors, I got one of my internships by asking one of my professors, hey, I'm looking for an internship,

getting a semester, where can I go? You send me down to the public affairs office, I spent two years in a public affairs office left with more by lines, and some people were entry level employment. Why? Because I simply asked, Where can I go? Right? Another opportunity is to if you if you are in a situation where you have parents who are connected in the business world, go for that I didn't have those connections. I'm a first generation college student. So that wasn't available to me. But for my children. Yeah, I'm a pretty well connected individual who may be able to facilitate some interviews and some opportunities that I didn't have. So don't feel bad. If you're a first generation student, just know that you'll be able to pay for it at another another time. And another juncture, and then you have obviously online resources, you have your monsters and you have uterine and you have my site internship manual, that calm you have intern Queen, you have all these online sites. But again, back to social media, so many jobs, use social media to promote the internship opportunities. And so you need to be on LinkedIn. Right, which is a professional networking site is not to hook up. And it's not to find your friends. It is a site is dedicated primarily to the opportunity to network with professionals, right. And so, Viacom is Disney, all those guys are promoting their internship opportunities via LinkedIn. And so that is one of the I think more popular places that students sometimes overlook, because they're not necessarily in that world, but log on, go through, set up a profile, fill it out and understand how to navigate that LinkedIn world. Social media, again, Instagram, all of these major brands. If you want to intern at a major brand, follow them right and see if they have a specific page for their interests where you can learn about when the internship opportunities will be available, as well as what they're looking for in their interns when you hear about their intern stories. So those are some resources your University Career Services Office, your professors, friends and family networking neighbors, could be somebody from our religious organization, fraternity sorority, He's just anybody that you may know. And then using your online resources like LinkedIn and social media, to be able to figure out where those opportunities are. And then the next step is to actually understand how to make yourself a competitive candidate.



20:14



Moira McCullough 20:15

Wow. So you know, what, a couple things. One, I think that that whole testing, you know, going into internships and looking at it, not just from the job perspective, it's also the culture, it's the environment, as you said, I remember somebody saying, you know, I hated sitting down and just working on numbers the whole time, we get to see anyone, we don't interact. That's something, put it in your notes, that is something that you want. Because I,

to your point, unless you had all those different opportunities and experiences, you wouldn't have the knowledge and the drive, when the time comes for that perfect job in your year, you're in a position where now you're exploring the different jobs, the responsibilities and the culture and the environment. That's an awful lot that adds stress to the system, when you don't need it. I love it, the Ask a lot of things are there available for you, but we never ask if I could go back in time, and talk with my professors. That was like 101, why did I do that I made my life so difficult.

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Sharise Kent 21:18

Yeah, I think that's a really important thing for students to be able to, you know, and can observe, getting experience building your network careers, and ultimately getting hired and asking people, this is the prime time in your life to do it. Why because once you're working professional, sometimes you're seeing this competition, sometimes people just aren't as friendly. But everybody likes to talk to college students. Why? Because it makes them relive their college experience. And so if you can find a way to navigate through LinkedIn or through a connection, generally you want to go with a warmer connection, and maybe sometimes some, some events that you may participate in, join your organizations Marketing Association, National Society of Black Engineers, VA Association, there's various organizations that are professional in nature, that again, to me following a guy experiential heading, right. So as a member, as an example of public relations, student Society of America, you get to have a two year associate membership you used to insert prsa, you need to check that out. But otherwise, if you wait, you have to be in a profession for five years before you can apply to be a part of the organization. Okay, same thing I don't know, Sherm Society of Human Resource professionals offers the same thing. So the professional organizations are a great way to start networking and attending conferences and attending events, because you get to hear from people who do what you want to do. And they love to spend their time like, I remember when I was to be a program engineer, let me say about that. Don't do it, or it's awesome, you're gonna love it, or these are the things that I didn't do, this would have sped my career up. So take advantage of this time of this label as a student, right, as an intern, embrace it. And one of the things I suggest doing are called intern, informational interviews, right? informational interviews. It's, it's it formalizes the process, right of you getting to know an individual and nobody career, it's not an interview for a job, although, you know, some people may call you back later when you graduate. But it's an opportunity to sit down with someone in a profession, you want to be in finance, you work your connections, maybe through an alumni connection at university, and you get 15 minutes with a person who works in investment banking, and you have five questions that you want to know that are good questions. What do I need to excel? What is the interview process? Like, you know, you put together those questions, and you now have this insight into understanding what it's going

to take to get into Goldman Sachs or JP Morgan and one of these places, because you've formed this relationship. And that's also how you then begin to form these relationships. These mentor mentee relationships which are so important, I've had numerous mentors throughout my career that have been very valuable when I need to make decisions that you know, they they become friends, but they're their mentors. And they've been just there for me for references as well as just to say that's a good move, or maybe not, or they know me well enough to supply me with insight into myself of whether or not that's a good move to make. So doing those informational interviews and net networking in that exploration allows you to build your network which ultimately becomes very important down the line.

M Moira McCullough 24:30

Have you heard about Anchor, it is the easiest way to make a podcast and it's free. You can use their own creation tools to record and edit your podcast right from your phone. Anchor will distribute your podcast for you. So it can be heard on Spotify, Apple podcast, iTunes and many more. You can make money from your podcast with no minimum listenership. If it sounds easy it is because it is here's how you do it. Download the free anchor app or go to anchor.fm For them to get started. Well, and you know, what I think is very important, too is sometimes it's it's establishing that mentor and that network when you don't need anything.

S Sharise Kent 25:14

Yes, that's when you

M Moira McCullough 25:18

Yes, because I think at some point, everyone's calling everyone, it's hard. They're using their network to get references to get a foot in the door to get an interview. But I think it's so important that once you have that mentor network, that you continue to keep in touch, develop it, strengthen it, during good times, and bad, no one likes to be asked all the time for something, sometimes it's nice to get that email to say, I'm just thinking about you. And wishing your well, family well. And it's like, what that's, that's really important, because notes are no longer the telephone calls are no longer so just getting an email to just say, you know, just want to keep in touch, hope you and your well would love to get grab a cup of coffee. And there's no sincerely ask at that moment. It's just keeping that dialogue going.

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Sharise Kent 26:02

Some of my mentors have known me from a college students who too now, married mother, they see pictures of my kids were friends on social media, you know, they started off as my my bosses, you know, in some situations, and my mentors were my superiors in their earlier stages in my career. So it doesn't always have to be a stranger. It can be somebody that you worked with. But if positioned either as an intern, or even an entry level employee, if you do good work, if you're a person that operates from a position of integrity, if they know that you put your all into that job, when you leave that position, those relationships don't have to end, I've been blessed to work at seven or eight different schools, I kind of lose count all of those institutions, I feel as though I can pick up the phone and talk to some of them. It's been a long career, because some people no longer work here. But I left on good terms. Because sometimes as professional you're going to grow, but that doesn't mean that relationships have to end doesn't mean that you talk to them every day. But those people who saw you when you were that one or two years out of school can potentially become mentors as well. Absolutely.

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Moira McCullough 27:13

I'd love to ask you, I saw it. And we talked about it before, just briefly, you have a diversity directory on your, on your website, can you share what that is and how students can find it. And companies can be a part of it.

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Sharise Kent 27:27

So I started the diversity directory because I felt like there wasn't a great resource available that list listed internships that were specifically from companies looking to have a diverse student pool for five years as the senior manager for a nonprofit organization called the T Howard Foundation, which provided internship opportunities for going to college students with companies like HBO, Showtime, CBS, fel MBA, and so forth. And so, my internship, you know, history as an intern working in college missions, that was a great segue from our career and in and in that space, the organization existed, because so many companies overlook the talent, you know, a couple of weeks ago with the Wells Fargo CEO made a comment that he may regret now that he could not find enough minority talent to fill executive positions, which is a disappointment to hear a statement like that from a company that you know, probably has ranks, professionals of color who are able to go in and do the jobs that they think can be done. And so organizations like t Howard sponsors for education, opportunity management, Felicia tomorrow fix, so she's because the universities have cool internship program, these organizations are out there, you're up in roses, one of the originals, these organizations are out there to provide talent

to companies that know and want to increase the representation of African Americans, Native Americans and students. And so these organizations work very hard to get the word out there. And some attraction is to provide internships primarily with fortune 500 companies. But there's other companies who don't participate within these organizations who or, you know, other industries who may not fit within the structure of what those organizations provide. And so I just decided that I wanted to be in this place where students who are looking specifically companies that are saying, Hey, we want students of color to be a part of our organization, and they can find the list. And so it's growing all the time, consistently adding organizations, companies, and so when I say organizations, I mean, organizations like to see how foundation where if a student gets in, they didn't have access to internships with a variety of companies as so you have your organizations and then you have companies, like, you know, McKinsey or you know, just companies that actually have departments dedicated to increasing diversity or programs Facebook, Google bold, the CIA, Oracle, you know, a lot of These organs, all of these companies have programs that they're out there trying to specifically target and recruit. Sometimes they look specifically at students who are at historically black colleges and universities depends on the program, like Hennessy has a program like that. So this directory is just basically it's you can't apply, it's not a job board. This is just a list of organizations and companies that say, look, we want diverse students. And I'm pleased to find that it's just collecting that data for companies that want to be a part of it, you know, they can fill out a form online, I just asked that it'd be a company that is dedicated to filling their world with a diverse candidate. It's pretty much it's free, there's no charge, I'm not saying Hey, you got to give me some, it's free, because this is a resource for these students who just need a place to find all this information. That doesn't mean they shouldn't apply to internships that may not specifically have those metrics around it, of trying to recruit students of color. But as a student of color, and knowing what that process is like, it's nice to be able to say, Wow, so these are all internships with companies that want to seek out talent so that they can increase the diversity of their internship, and ultimately, their job force.

 Moira McCullough 31:11

Well, it's so helpful having one place to go, I mean, it could take you hours of research, what you did to put that together, is ongoing. No, I mean, it's it's so much data out there, but not enough information. And you could get it's unwieldy. So what you've provided is a resource and a place that students can go to narrow the search and not not just only search there, but at least have an opportunity to find it in a well compiled exactly the one source.



Sharise Kent 31:41

And I think what's a little different than maybe some other sites or some of the resources is that the directory is there. But there's also other information, how to write a resume, how do I interview, and just different pieces of information that can assist us through that process to stay on track? You know, what can I do to prepare for myself? You know, what are the questions I should be asking? So you have the opportunity to obviously access a directory, but you may just have a question about, you know, what are five ways to find an internship or are different that nature or coming up on graduation, and there's not as much content as related to student loans? But you know, what do I do as a new graduate? And now I'm facing student loans? How do I approach this process of paying it off? And some of that period of which you hit that graduation Mark? And now you're questioning? How do I pay this off while being able to live a life and and for other students? How do you not incur that type of debt. So that doesn't, doesn't necessarily fall into that internship heading. But this interesting career of mine in higher ed, admissions and so forth, allows me to kind of peek over into this world and say, okay, through this collegiate process, you don't necessarily have to incur the amount of debt that some students are led to believe is necessary to get a quality education. So how do you do that? You know, so there's a lot of different little tidbits of information,



Moira McCullough 33:05

Which is so very important. Now, as everyone knows college is so expensive, and I saw that in your site going through it, and I'm like managing student debt. It's a deal breaker for many students who might just say, No, I can't afford it. And what you're saying is no, there's ways you can do it and manage it without paying \$25,000 to get that information.



Sharise Kent 33:26

Right, right. And it's, oh, I don't want to go down a rabbit hole here. I think I have a very interesting view on the whole concept and how students will demonstrate approach it, if you have the finances to approach it, have a go do it, you know, if you're in a position to be able to do it, you have 3000 colleges across this country. And I think that every student has to figure out the route on a path. But the financial aspect of that is often that's off the table with the attitude of both that, well, you'll make money when you get out of school and pay it off. Well, your average salary is \$40-45,000 a year, right? You're not gonna, you know, come out with an impressive salary from an undergraduate program, typically your engineers \$55k range, right? So the assumption that you can take off \$80,000 in debt, and then graduate and move into a position making \$40,000 the math doesn't work. The thing that I like to talk about is that when I was working for the TR Foundation, I had the

opportunity to work with students across the country. I've been in a lot of campuses recruiting from University of Georgia to University of Southern California, University of South Carolina, University of Pennsylvania to Brown to VCU, like Howard and Hampton and then, I've had the opportunity to interact with a lot of the students. You know, they all got an internship. Right? So I would have my students in Boise State in the same room as Muslims from Brown. Let that sink in for many, right. It wasn't totally about the institution they were coming from it was about the student in themselves and what they were bringing to the opportunity to first get into the foundation and have access to the internship, but then have the internship they have to shine through, you know, and so, yes, there are some benefits of attending, potentially a more prestigious institution may be related to networking. But at the end of the day, it is about the students, it is about the experiences that they're bringing is about how they are positioning themselves to impact that company. And if you can keep that at the forefront of your mind, you won't necessarily be in a position that says, I have to go to X school, I can tell you in the time that a mentorship program, I had one company, say we want students from this school, it was an engineering department within a major company. And the schools on the list were schools that most of the people in the department went to. So it wasn't even a scenario in which they were looking at the top 50 list. It was schools that they happen to go to that they just like, right, and you know, 100 students a year, you know, were placed and, you know, so. So it's not necessarily a situation where you have to attend to any students. Now, the caveat to that I do think exists when it relates to high end consulting, when you get into organizations like McKinsey, Bain BCG, or if you're getting into finance and you want to work at Goldman Sachs, or, you know, city, I think there are some caveats to those industries specifically. But when you look at Facebook and Google, those guys barely are saying you need a degree now, right? So there's a caveat, if you want to be in finance, if you want to be in high high end consulting, there may be some advantages that that are associated specifically with attending more prominent institutions. But outside of that, if you know, if you want to be a journalist, go to school, at the most affordable way, and start getting byline start writing, start keeping it keep keeping a blog and start freelancing. And that is going to be what can compound it with your degree puts you in a position to excel.

M Moira McCullough 36:59

You have given us so much information in such a short time. What do you wish you knew before you attended college?

S Sharise Kent 37:07

Well, I think now, where I am, I think I wished that I would have known that I was capable

of challenging myself more, I did a lot of internships. But I strayed away from certain subject areas specifically like math, right. And so I didn't maybe challenge myself and learn some things. Whereas now in my career, I built databases, and done a lot of technical things that I didn't necessarily know was something I was going to be able to do. So I think I wish I would have known to maybe stretch outside of my comfort zone into some areas that may have been a little intimidating. But I also didn't want to like, screw up my GPA. So but you can do that now and through massive online courses, or MOOCs and other capacities, where you can test a skill set. And so that's one thing I wish I knew. And one thing I wish I would have done was study abroad, you know, I did not take the opportunity. While I was stupid to do that. And I do think that there's value in it being exposed to different places, different cultures, obviously, you can go on trips, and so forth. But I think I wish that's the one regret I have, I would say about being a student is not trying to facilitate that opportunity. I was very, very focused on graduating four years. And I didn't want to do anything to derail that. But I wish I would have fit that in somehow. And that is an experience. I encourage students if it's financially feasible, and academically feasible to give it a shot.

M

Moira McCullough 38:37

I love that I did take that opportunity. And I remember coming back and I was almost one credit short of graduating and I thought my parents were giving my lecture you have the credits before you go back to your floor and done. That's what I said to my kids, you know, you didn't get out. Exactly. So do you have a favorite dessert spot? You just mentioned all these colleges that you've been on campus and I know it's pretty. And you don't have to have dessert, I'll open it up the floor to a favorite food spot.

S

Sharise Kent 39:09

Okay, I'll go a little bit different. And I will say, and this is going to be a relatively blanket statement. But historically, black colleges and universities have the best food. Right? So when you walk on campus at many HBCU's from Howard to Hamptons, Lincoln's a fish to buoy to, to FAMU to you know, I won't list all hundred and so, but you find foods that you won't normally find at other institutions, you're going to find a lot of soul food. So when you're eating on campus and you're eating in the residence hall, you're actually getting so full, you're getting a mac and cheese and you're getting things that your mom may have made that I don't necessarily find on other campuses. So that's a general shout out to HBCUs in the food. Whenever I used to do recruitment events, I was always looking for it with university I'm sure Wilberforce wherever it was, I was always very excited when I was on HBCU campus because generally speaking, the food, the soap, you know myself food

on a lot of college campuses,

M Moira McCullough 40:11

I love that - just go into the cafeterias.

S Sharise Kent 40:14

Yeah, you're young. You know, you have to get specific with it. Just the fact that you can go in and find a peach cobbler and mac and cheese and fried chicken and just other soulful things that you will find in a soulful restaurant on campus.

M Moira McCullough 40:28

Love that. Now I know where I'm going.

S Sharise Kent 40:31

Yes, and the next thing is, tell me what you want to go. On your next visit. Get down enough Kalina and see on enough, central Claflin are some of these great institutions? And you'll be like, yeah, I really enjoyed this.

M Moira McCullough 40:44

I want to go on a road trip with you surely, we have a lot of fun

S Sharise Kent 40:49

Stuff good stuff. I like to eat. I got it.

M Moira McCullough 40:52

I mean, life is short. My whole thing is, you know, I'm gonna enjoy it while I'm here.

S Sharise Kent 40:56

A lot workout later.

M Moira McCullough 41:00

Sharise, thank you so much for joining us today. Appreciate it.

S Sharise Kent 41:03

You're no problem. enjoyed it.

M Moira McCullough 41:08

Thank you, Sharise for joining us today to help students as they transition from college to a career. be intentional with your core selection. Sign up for a coding class or stem Class. Be open to internships in different disciplines. Take note of the culture and environment of the companies you work at. Get to know the Career Services Department earlier rather than later. Ask professors for ideas and advice and join professional organizations as a student. You can find all of our show notes and links to the helpful resources mentioned throughout our conversation on our website at CollegeScoops.com. You can learn more about Sharise on her website at ShariseKent.com on Instagram at the [internship_manual](#) or on Facebook. Please take a couple of minutes to rate review and subscribe to college scoops. Thank you for listening to our College Scoops podcast. Our entire College Scoops team strives to make the college journey a little bit easier, less stressful, fun and tasty by sharing all the inside scoops we have curated along the way. We would love to hear from you about topics to cover and your ideas and everything college related. Reach out to us at collegescoops.com or follow us on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook.