



Name: Stephanie Wegmann

Josef Korbel School degree program: MA [International Development](#)

Undergraduate institution/major: College of St. Benedict; B.A. in Peace Studies

Language skills: Spanish

Tell us about yourself:

I am a second year international development student from rural Minnesota. During my undergraduate studies at the College of St. Benedict in St. Joseph, MN, I was awarded the [Thomas R. Pickering Undergraduate Affairs Fellowship](#), which, upon graduating from Korbel, provides me with a fast-track into the [U.S. Foreign Service](#). I love to travel and have been fortunate enough to study in Austria, Italy, Kenya and Guatemala. I've completed two internships with the U.S. State Department, one at the Operations Center in Washington D.C. and the other at the U.S. Consulate General in Hong Kong. I feel fortunate to have found a career that allows me to focus on foreign policy issues that I care about, while also fostering my love for adventure abroad.

What brought you to the Josef Korbel School?

The Pickering fellowship requires that we attend a two-year program through a member of the [Association of Professional Schools of International Affairs](#) (APSIA). I was debating between Korbel and the Fletcher School at Tufts University, but ultimately chose Korbel due to the flexibility of its programs and the quality of life in Denver.

What are your career goals?

I can see my career going in several directions – upon completing my contract with the State Department, I could easily see myself continuing my career as a Foreign Service Officer and being a career diplomat. However, part of me would also love the opportunity to teach about international issues at a high school level or work in the non-profit sector. I'm planning on leaving my options open.

Internship site: U.S. Consulate General Hong Kong

Intern title: Public Affairs Intern

How did you obtain your internship?

The Pickering fellowship requires that fellows complete an internship at a U.S. consulate or embassy overseas, and helps to place us based on our interests.

What were your primary responsibilities?

My responsibilities varied immensely, which allowed me to experience many aspects of the public affairs section (PAS). My work was split between both the cultural affairs side and the press/media side of things. My basic job functions consisted of editing the daily Media Alert and Media Reaction products (summaries of local editorials which are sent back to Main State in Washington D.C.), going out to local schools to give speeches on aspects of the U.S. higher education system, presenting briefings to local students who were about to leave to study abroad in the U.S., writing the PAS Highlights product which summarizes our section's outreach efforts for D.C., and also helping out with Secretary Clinton's Hong Kong visit.

What's the most important lesson you learned during your internship?

Even though the U.S. State Department is a bureaucracy with a definite hierarchy, my time in Hong Kong taught me how important it is to be a team player and that, no matter how low you may be on the totem pole, as a representative of the United States abroad you have a responsibility to carry yourself in a way that reflects positively on your country and government. Diplomacy is not something that you can turn off when your work day is over. As a representative of the United States government, you need to be 'on' even when buying your morning coffee because it's this kind of public diplomacy that can really change people's perceptions about the United States and Americans.