



## **My Internship with RTD: Navigating Colorado and Beyond**

By Michal Varga, Strategic Communication graduate student

I remember the night, back in 2010, when I landed in Colorado Springs, Colo. and entered the United States for the first time quite vividly. I was extremely excited about going to college, being in a new country and a million other things.

Then, culture shock set in when I realized that Colorado Springs lacked viable public transportation.

I was born and raised in Europe and spent a few years in Hong Kong. Buses and trains were always ubiquitous. Fortunately, when I moved to Denver I found out that comprehensive, multi-modal transportation systems could exist in mid-sized cities as well.

I am passionate about promoting public transportation and having an impact on its development in Colorado.

As a strategic communication student at DU, I want to use my expertise to raise awareness among the Denver metro area community about complex transportation systems.

Beginning in summer 2015, I began a special events internship position with RTD, which has allowed me to use the skills I have learned through the strategic communication program. A part of my role is to encourage even more people to use Denver's public transportation system. Each week, I am a copywriter, campaign organizer, event planner and much more. I also learn several new skills on daily basis.

RTD plans to launch the largest publicly funded and voter approved public transportation system expansion in 2016. Our department is in for a busy year. I am a part of the planning committee, and will organize events for hundreds of thousands of people.

After I graduate, I would love to leverage my experience at both DU and RTD and find a full time account executive role with RTD. This would allow me to continue to pursue my passion, while continuing to navigate, and help others to navigate, Colorado.