

This summer I worked as an intern for The Daily Caller, a 24-hour news website based out of Washington, D.C. The website was founded in 2010 by Fox News contributor Tucker Carlson and Neil Patel, a former assistant to Dick Cheney. Since 2010, the website has grown exponentially and is now visited by an estimated 12 million readers per month. The Daily Caller is unique in the fact that it makes money, something that cannot be said by most news websites of its kind. They employ some 20 full time reporters, as well as a team of advertising marketers and freelance journalists. The site mostly reports on news that interests a conservative audience; however they also have sports and entertainment sections.

I worked as an intern for The Daily Caller from late May to mid-July. There were roughly fifteen interns working for the site during my time there, ranging in age from seniors in high school to recent college graduates. I averaged 5 articles a week, and had my articles published 35 times. The Daily Caller is unusual in the respect that they give their interns relative freedom over choosing and writing articles. Once a topic had been approved by an editor, you can then write it up and it will almost always be published. Rather than running to get coffee or doing petty tasks, I felt as though I was really contributing to the development of the website with my articles. From 9 am when I arrived at the office to 5 pm when I left, I was combing the internet for interesting or unusual topics that would appeal to the site's audience. Topics ranged from the ongoing crisis in Iraq to a slideshow of famous movie stars. Although some of the bigger topics were reserved for the reporters, I was still able to contribute meaningful stories to the site.

This internship helped me to develop my writing skills immensely. I learned how to make an interesting lead sentence that would capture the audience's attention and make them want to read the

rest of the article. I also learned how to boil a news story down to clear and concise facts, giving the reader everything they needed to know about a topic, and nothing more. My biggest takeaway was learning the hectic business of the modern day 24-hour news cycle. If you don't have a breaking story up within one or two hours after it has happened, then there is no point at writing the article at all. A big thing for reporters at The Daily Caller was “Drudge links,” which basically means whether or not their article would get linked to a website called the Drudge Report. The Drudge Report would advertise links on their website that were either original reporting or articles that were well written. If you got your story linked on the Drudge Report, it would be read by millions of more people, giving exposure for both you and the website.

Most of the internship involved simply finding stories on the internet and writing about them, however there were other responsibilities the interns undertook. We were responsible for things such as minding the front desk, greeting the people who came into the office; however I only had to do this once every couple of weeks due to the large amount of interns we had. Another duty was monitoring comments, deleting ones that included racism or harsh language. Towards the latter part of the internship, we would be assigned in shifts to check up on social media, reaching out to popular twitter users who would tweet out our articles in an attempt to establish a relationship with them that would translate into more traffic for the site. It wasn't all work, however. We got to attend a Washington Nationals baseball game and take a trip to the Newseum, all paid for by The Daily Caller. We also got to attend White House and Capitol Hill press briefings.

A big positive of the internship was the laid back atmosphere in the office. We were told on the first day that because the internship was unpaid, no one was going to be breathing down our backs forcing us to do work. If you wanted to be on Facebook all day, then that is what you chose to do with

your time, and no one was going to yell at you for not doing work. We were also able to come and go from the office as we pleased. No one was going to police unpaid interns, and I was thankful for that. I don't think I would have enjoyed the internship as much had it been an authoritarian type of office. Everyone at The Daily Caller was incredibly helpful throughout the course of my internship. The editorial team answered every question I had, however basic it was. The entire office, from Tucker Carlson to the interns, got along really well the entire time I was there. There was no “office drama” to speak of, and the interns were not looked down upon by any of the staff.

With all of this freedom, however, there were times throughout the day when boredom took over. Most days, unless there was a huge breaking story, I found that there wasn't much to write about in the mid to late afternoon. This was through no fault of The Daily Caller, it is just how the 24-hour news cycle works, and sometimes you simply run out of things to cover.

This internship exposed me to a lot of new and exciting things. As far as career goals go, before the internship I was certainly interested in journalism; however I was unsure of what it really consisted of. Now that I have been exposed to journalism, I still find it interesting; however I have realized that I am more interested in world news than events that are happening in the U.S. The Daily Caller, although interested in world news, placed more of an emphasis on national news than anything else. This gave me a great inside look into our country and government, however I also found myself being more passionate about what was happening outside of our borders than inside of them when choosing a topic for an article. I was able to see how good and informed writing is noticed by cable news organizations such as Fox News, where reporters from The Daily Caller made frequent appearances to talk about stories they had written earlier that day. I enjoyed being able to improve my writing, and I find myself being more interested in writing now that I have completed this internship. Overall, I felt that my

internship with The Daily Caller was a positive experience and I learned more than I expected to going into it.