

Connecticut College

HOLLERAN CENTER #5277  
270 Mohegan Avenue  
New London, CT 06320  
TELEPHONE  
(860) 439-2596

# HOLLERAN CENTER PICA JUNIORS IN ACTION

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I am the international initiatives and special events intern, which is in the development and outreach division at Human Rights Watch (HRW). I help plan events like the annual dinners, which are held around the world. Events like these help raise the funds needed to do the work that HRW does. I also do follow up for events, which involves calculating growth analysis as well as donor follow up. HRW is one of the only NGO's dealing with human rights issues that doesn't accept government funding, which is why fundraising is so important for HRW's work.

HRW is known for its accurate fact-finding, impartial reporting, effective use of media, and targeted advocacy. Each year, HRW publishes more than 100 reports and briefings on human rights conditions in some 90 countries, generating coverage in local and international media. This allows HRW to meet with governments, the United Nations, regional groups like the African Union and the European Union, financial institutions, and corporations to press for changes in policy and practice that promote human rights and justice around the world.

Working with HRW has given me access to publications, key people in the human rights field, and knowledge about what it takes to change policy and make a difference. One of my jobs is to promote

the work that HRW does, which means that even though I am a development intern I have to learn about what each division is researching and what policies are trying to be changed. So far, my internship has helped me realize that path that I want to take in the future, and has helped me realize my passion for human rights.

HRW has an intern speaker series, which involves weekly sessions with different people in the organization. Topics range from writing press releases, how to advance your career, and information about the different divisions. We also get to speak with key HRW staff, including the director. Their intern program offers a lot of benefits, and it really is what you make of it. I sit at a desk with seven other interns from different divisions, so we all get to learn about each others' work.

Your internship and the knowledge that you gain from your experience is what you make of it. I do many administrative tasks along with my other work, but I take every opportunity to talk to other staff members, interns, read books written by staff, read reports on countries, and learn as much as I can. Be your own self-advocate and be proactive. It will help make your internship experience much more valuable and enjoyable.

