

NIRI-NY'S ACTION FOR 9/11 VICTIMS

Internship program run by chapter is named after Elizabeth Logler, eSpeed's IRO who died in the World Trade Center attacks 10 years ago

An internship program set up by NIRI's New York chapter to help the children of those who died during the 9/11 terrorist attacks is still going strong nine years after it placed its first group of students.

The NIRI-NY Logler 9/11 Internship Program, which has run every summer since 2002, offers those who lost a parent the chance of a paid internship in an IR, PR or corporate communications role with a member of the chapter. The program is named after Elizabeth (known as Beth) Logler, vice president of IR at eSpeed, who died during the attacks on the World Trade Center in 2001.

Working with registered charities Tuesday's Children and the Silver Shield Foundation, NIRI-NY locates companies willing to take on an intern and then acts as an intermediary between the two sides.

The scheme placed three students this summer at BGC Partners, MF Global and Lane PR. Given the young age of many of the victims' children at the time of the 9/11 attacks, the number of applications is expected to rise over the next couple of years, says Patrick Tracey,

a senior vice president at Computershare who looks after the internship program at NIRI-NY.

'With each year, more of the children get older, so we're hoping we'll get more candidates for next year,' he says. 'That's what has happened with the program over the last couple of years.'

HOW IT BEGAN

The internship program was thought up at a NIRI-NY chapter meeting that took place shortly after the 9/11 attacks. Instead of postponing the regularly scheduled meeting, the board decided to run it as planned and use it to try to think of ways they could help the victims' families.

It was Mary Beth Kissane, a communications consultant and NIRI-NY's then secretary, who came up with the idea for the program. 'There were a lot of people leaving behind very young children who



Mary Beth Kissane,
Walek & Associates

were facing having someone missing in terms of mentoring them in their life,' she explains.

At the meeting there were lots of proposals involving money, recalls Kissane, who is currently principal at Walek & Associates. But she thought an internship program would be a more sustainable option, and would also support NIRI's mission of promoting the IR profession.

Kissane herself handled the internship program initially, before passing it on to Patricia Dougherty of Colgate-Palmolive, and Tracey has now picked up the reins. 'Of course, the whole board contributes – it's a proper NIRI-NY initiative,' Kissane adds.

GAINING EXPERIENCE

This summer's interns gained first-hand experience of IR and PR at the three participating sponsor companies. 'Whether it was conducting research, pulling together a media list or analyzing results, [our intern] did a great job,' says Amber Roberts, managing director of Lane PR.

Over at BGC Partners, head of IR Jason McGruder decided to take part in the scheme due to his company's links to Logler and eSpeed. In 2001, BGC Partners and eSpeed were separate subsidiaries of Cantor Fitzgerald, the bond trader that lost more than 650 members of staff in the World Trade Center attacks. Cantor later merged the two firms into a single entity under the brand BGC Partners, which operates as a publicly traded subsidiary of Cantor.

It struck McGruder that if any



Amber Roberts,
Lane PR

company was involved in the internship program, it should be BGC Partners. 'I went to our chairman Howard Lutnick and he said, *Of course,*' explains McGruder.

As part of the experience, McGruder asked his intern to do a PowerPoint presentation in front of executives and managers comparing BGC to its four publicly traded com-

petitors, followed by a Q&A session. He also got him to organize a networking event for the other interns at Cantor and BGC, to give him some experience of the event-management side of the IR industry.

At least one former intern from the program is known to have gone on to secure a full-time job in the investor relations profession.

Looking back over the last 10 years, Kissane has many fond memories of the people involved in the internship. She mentions in particular Martin Duffy, NIRI-NY's first contact at the Silver Shield Foundation, who sadly died a couple of years after the program began. She also praises the work of KC Fuchs, who took over as the chapter's contact at the foundation.

Kissane says the most rewarding part of the program for her personally was working with the victims' families. 'It certainly puts all kinds of things in perspective,' she states. ■

Logler 9/11 Internship

Employers with an internship in IR, PR, corporate communications or media relations can contact Patrick Tracey, vice president of sponsorship at NIRI-NY, to get involved in the program. The chapter works with recognized charities, such as Tuesday's Children and the Silver Shield Foundation, to collect résumés from college students. NIRI-NY then passes these résumés on to employers, which can directly contact the students. More information is available on NIRI-NY's website.

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