

# SENIOR'S INTERNSHIP EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS... FOR EVERYONE INVOLVED!

Last fall, Elmhurst College senior Melissa Steirer earned an internship at City Hall in nearby Addison, Illinois. She did more and did better than had been expected, too; before it was done Steirer had not only discovered some of her professional interests, but also enjoyed herself and truly made a difference for her employer.

When she first heard about the potential internship (assisting the City Clerk), Steirer checked it out carefully. "I did some research on my own," she said. "It sounded like a great opportunity, so I tried to learn about the Village of Addison, about what was involved in the internship." Only then did she approach them.

The work included city licenses and permits ("practical stuff that has to get done for the Village to be successful," she said), but a noteworthy part turned out to be civic fundraising events. Addison's annual Mayors Ball was a vital philanthropic night for the Village, and Steirer helped take it to new heights by proposing one simple, effective idea: using her Elmhurst College network and connections.

"Would it be OK," Steirer asked her boss, "if my sorority sisters came to staff the Mayor's Ball as volunteer workers?"

Would it ever. Not only did the women sell a lot more raffle tickets than the previous volunteers had (which the Addison Mayor's committee loved) but they also had a great time. "Usually community service is raking leaves or picking



Melissa Steirer '09

up garbage," laughed Steirer, "but WE got to put on black dresses and help at a Ball."

The Sorority followed up with another philanthropic activity, volunteering at an Autism fundraiser (the City Clerk's extended family includes an autistic child). "The 20 EC students I helped bring were the majority of the event's volunteers," Steirer remembered. Looking at those events, and at her internship in totality, she reflected that "I think I kind of went above and beyond the call."

Steirer's thoughts about the CPE go beyond last autumn's internship, too. "I don't think people take enough advantage of the CPE," she said. "For a long time, I thought it was just for business majors but no – they teach you skills that apply anywhere."

"The other thing that I like about the CPE is EC Connect (the Center's web site for job seekers and job providers). After just one visit, I was really surprised that there were so many opportunities – so many good things you can do!"

Melissa Steirer is one more CPE "convert" who has a successful story to tell. Might you be the next?

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