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Speech communication – public relation

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Undergraduate spotlight on…Nikki Arends

 Nikki Arends is a senior minoring in speech communication. This summer, Arends participated in the International Public Relations program, a four week study abroad course in France and Romania. Twelve students were chosen to participate in the program, which included interning at public relations firms and taking classes with French and Romanian professors.

 Arends became interested in the International public relations program because she believed it would give her a boost if she decides to go into a career in international speech communication. Arends currently has an internship with Creative Producer’s group, a corporate special events company. With CPG, she is working on Pedal the Cause, a charity bike ride in St. Louis. She makes phone calls and sends emails to make sure they have entertainment and vendor booths at the event.

 The International PR trip was a rewarding experience for Arends who has always wanted to visit Europe. The international aspect broadened her horizons. Arends noted that it helped her understand how different cultures have different ways of doing public relations. “In America, we are advanced in PR, so we had learned most of what they were teaching already,” said Arends. “It was interesting seeing how patriotic the countries are.” Romania is currently being rebuilt from a Communist government to a Democracy, which Arends found enlightening.

 When asked what one piece of advice she would give to her fellow undergraduate students, Arends said that any form of study abroad is necessary. “Seeing other countries’ cultures makes you well rounded and diverse in your areas of expertise. There are many ways to study abroad; you just have to pick one.”

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