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'Sex and the city' intern

West Genny grad lands costume job, role as extra in new movie

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Landing an internship with the upcoming "Sex and the City" movie taught Jenna Polito a few things about fame and fashion.

A 2006 West Genesee High School graduate, Polito, 19, is a sophomore studying fashion design at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City.

For 15 weeks during the fall 2007 semester, Polito interned in the costume department on the set of "Sex and the City." Based on Candace Bushnell's book, the upcoming movie began as an original television series on HBO. The show, which aired for six seasons, featured actress Sarah Jessica Parker as Carrie Bradshaw, a sex columnist, and her three friends. Together, they explored Manhattan's dating scene.

The movie is scheduled to be released in May.

When Polito signed up for an internship through F.I.T., she didn't request to work on a movie. And since she applied at the last minute, Polito said she missed the boat for a job with a design company, which is what she wanted.

Although she didn't get her ideal internship, Polito said the "Sex and the City" internship gave her an opportunity to handle high-end, designer clothing and accessories. She also met the movie's stars, including Parker, Kim Cattrall, Kristin Davis and Cynthia Nixon.

A perk of the internship was when she got to spend a day as an extra in a scene from the movie. For a few seconds, you can see her playing a ritzy gal sitting two rows behind Parker and friends at a Vivienne Westwood fashion show.

Even though she was pretty star-struck being around the movie's famous actresses on a regular basis, Polito said she did not ask for autographs or photos.

"You have to be professional," Polito said. "They were really, really nice."

I can't say they ever got rude or anything."

What did you do on the set?

"So many public relations firms for high-end designers wanted to give us clothes for the movie to advertise their line. We got a lot of Chanel, Fendi, Valentino and things from Barneys and Saks.

"My task was in the costume department. I kept track of all the merchandise after the fittings and checked off what had to be returned. I also helped out with some fittings."

What was your schedule like?

"I worked two days a week. I would be there 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. but sometimes I stayed until 9:30 p.m."

Did you work with celebrities?

"I didn't get to measure anyone. During the fittings, they would come into the costume department and I got to see the actresses, so that was cool.

"We would say, 'Hi,' to them ... they were very nice. They would give us gifts sometimes like T-shirts to thank us ... they gave us a jacket from Sarah Jessica Parker's new clothing line, Bitten."

In person, how did the actresses look?

"When they come for their fitting, sometimes they don't even wear makeup. I saw Sarah Jessica Parker without makeup and she still looks nice. She's very petite, but very muscular. She's probably about 5-foot-4 (inches)."

What was it like to be an extra?

"It took 16 hours to film that one scene and I was in it for a few seconds.

It was fun, but we just had to wait around a lot. They have to take so many different angles and cuts. We just had to sit there."

What was it like to handle expensive clothes?

"A lot of the clothes for the movie are on loan from designers. It was really inspiring sometimes to get to see all their work.

"When you're at those high-end stores, you can't just stare at the clothes it was really interesting to be able to look at the clothes up-front.

"Sometimes we would get 10 garment bags a day. Sometimes there are five dresses in a bag or 10 pairs of shoes. Calvin Klein sent 20 garment bags in one day." Any major drama on the set?

"Not really. One production assistant had to go all the way to Mexico to get a dress because shipping wouldn't make it in time. Sarah Jessica Parker needed it the next day so the production assistant had to travel there,

and back the next day."

Any advice for those seeking a similar internship?

"You should ask a lot of questions and don't be scared to speak up if you want to.

"To be an extra, I had to ask. Don't be afraid to ask questions and try to learn a lot from it. Don't be overwhelmed."

What are your future plans?

"I don't really want to work with a movie. It was fun, but what I really want to do is design for a big, well-known company maybe start off being an assistant designer and work my way up."

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