



Junaid Ahmed

IWU Major(s)/Minor(s): Economics and Political Science double major

Collegiate activities: International student activities like International Carnival, Model UN, Argos Photography, Acacia Fraternity

Graduation year: 1996

Current role/title and location: Senior Broadcast Journalist with BBC News; based in London, UK

Advice for current international students: My world while at IWU was very different from what it is now. I spoke to my family once a month and wrote letters from time to time. The internet arrived in my senior year; there were no cell phones. That sense of isolation meant that international students had to rely on each other for company and conversations. That was a very useful experience. I learned about other cultures more in Bloomington than in other places. My advice is to immerse yourselves in the life that IWU offers and create strong friendships that will stand the test of time. Take all the career and internship opportunities that become available. At the same time, try to take part in academic trips because I found them to be invaluable.

This is the best time of your life to try and do things that are outside your comfort zone. When you get an internship, try not to think of it only as a way to land a job, but also use it as a way to find out whether you are in the right career path. And even though your first job may not be your ideal one, it is much easier to look for a desirable job while employed.

It is also very important to read as much as possible about the industry that you are getting into.

Did you complete an internship? If so, please briefly describe that experience. I did an internship during the summer of my Junior year at the UN office of the World Federalist Movement, which is based in New York. Its job was to promote UN causes and it was closely involved with setting up the mechanisms that eventually led to the creation of the International Criminal Court a few years later. I worked as an aide to its director and attended various meetings, as well as organized research papers and UN documents. It gave me great exposure to the workings of the United Nations and the non-profits that work alongside various international bodies, an experience I still find useful so many years after graduation.

How did you successfully navigate the grad school/job search process? I returned to Bangladesh after my graduation. At that time my aim was to work in a non-profit that worked with people who are economically deprived. I was lucky that there was an opening in the communications team of one of the biggest NGOs in Bangladesh. I worked longer and harder than most of my colleagues and shortly afterwards, I was assigned to be the Executive Assistant to its chief. That opened up a new door for me as I began to write and design their advocacy material. After doing that job for a couple of years, I joined the BBC as a news producer and have been with this organization ever since in various roles.