

SAN FRANCISCO STATE GRADUATE

Kody Cullum is blind and partially deaf and has excelled in his studies at San Francisco (SF) State, graduating with a double major in politics and international relations and a minor in criminal justice studies. Cullum plans a career in international law.

Graduating with a double major hasn't been easy for Cullum. He has a genetic disease called Norries Syndrome, making him blind since birth and causing gradual hearing loss during the last 12 years. While Cullum is modest about his accomplishments, those around him believe he is extraordinary. When he first enrolled at SF State in 2007, he commuted to campus daily by BART from El Cerrito. He has memorized the campus layout in order to travel independently and has studied using E-text versions of books that he then reads using screen reading software or by converting the files to Braille.

Cullum has a unique perspective on his disability. He considers the sheer volume of academic work as his main challenge. By taking up this line of thought, Cullum says he realizes that he is not alone and faces the same challenges as all other students. Cullum has applied to several law schools.



KODY CULLUM PLANS A CAREER
IN INTERNATIONAL LAW.

PRESTIGIOUS INTERNSHIP

Senior Mitchell Paschen, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, of Baraboo, WI, is gaining real-world information technology experience through his internship with U.S. Customs and Border Protection in Washington, DC.

The Microsoft-AAPD Federal IT Internship Program is offered through the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) and is sponsored by Microsoft. The program provides students with disabilities, who have shown an interest in information technology careers, with the opportunity to participate in highly sought-after

federal internships.

Ten college students with disabilities from all over the country were chosen for this year's internship program. Paschen has Asperger's syndrome, a high-functioning autism spectrum disorder. "It is a real honor to be one of only ten people to be accepted into the AAPD IT internship program," Paschen says. "It feels great to be the best of the best."

After receiving an E-mail about the internship and learning that lodging and airfare would be included, Paschen figured he had nothing to lose by applying. An interview followed and after several weeks he received the good news. The experience Paschen is gaining is inval-

able. He will have the opportunity to improve his technical computer skills as he works to deploy 152 new computers and shadows the Customs and Border Protection server technician.

"The classroom can only teach so much when it comes to computers and working with them," Paschen explains. "Experience is needed in the real world to not only obtain a job these days, but also to gain the skills needed to be successful in IT."

Every day brings something new at the Customs and Border Protection office. On a typical day, Paschen does anything from setting up computers to dealing with software issues. When he is not working, Paschen enjoys being a tourist and taking advantage of all Washington, DC, has to offer.

Known to his family and friends as a human GPS, Paschen is well on his way to achieve his dream to combine his interests in geography and information technology by working for a company that deals with GPS software.

"This internship will teach me the technical computer skills required to maintain a computer system and help with how the computers are put together," Paschen adds. "In order to get into the higher end stuff like GPS I need to learn the basics of computers and this internship will help with that."

UNT HELPS TRANSITION

Identifying a career path can be challenging for any young adult, but the process of transitioning into the workforce can be especially daunting for young people with disabilities. Two different departments at the University of North Texas (UNT) help area students with disabilities explore their career options and develop personalized career paths this summer.

The department of rehabilitation, social work, and addiction studies offers the Career Crusin' Camp for high-school-aged students. The weeklong day camp is designed to increase the confi-

CAMPUS BEAT



TWO DEPARTMENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS HELP STUDENTS EXPLORE THEIR CAREER OPTIONS.

dence of participants while helping them identify their strengths, interests, and work preferences. Campers take a number of assessments, learn about the resources available to them, and even job shadow selected jobs that are available on the UNT campus.

The program is being sponsored by the Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services and takes place on the UNT campus. Campers should have completed at least their sophomore year of high school and should be under the age of 22. Campers can have any level of physical or mental disability. Graduate students run the camp from the College of Public Affairs and Community Service. The camp had three sessions during July, and each session was able to accommodate up to 20 campers. The fourth day of each camp included a "Walk About" tour of the UNT campus that allowed campers to explore different work environments available on a university campus.

Students in the special education program in UNT's department of educational psychology helped students with disabilities learn how to successfully

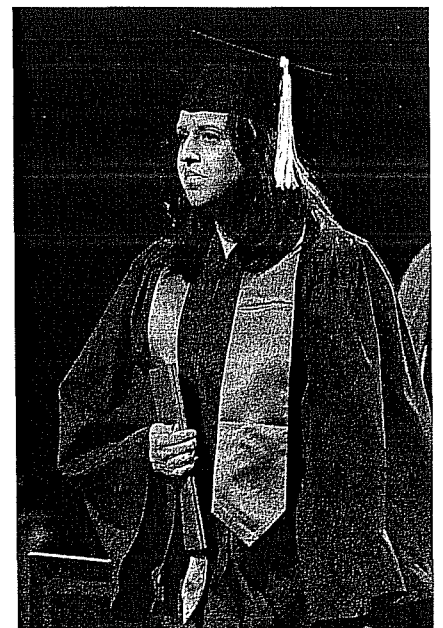
transition into the workforce. The special education teacher education candidates from EDSP 4360, transition education and services, an upper-level course, worked with My Possibilities, an organization in Plano that works with adults with development disabilities on a class project called My Possibilities University (MPU). During their time at My Possibilities, the UNT students taught two courses, American pop culture and American history.

DEPAUL SYMPOSIUM

When Cecelia Reyes earned a bachelor's degree from DePaul University, she knows she faces an uphill battle finding a job in today's economic downturn. But having lived with multiple sclerosis since age 20, her challenge is even more daunting. And that is why Reyes will continue on to graduate school to make herself a stronger job candidate for prospective employers. "I feel I have to strive for higher degrees to make up for my illness," says Reyes, 25, of Chicago's Garfield Ridge neighborhood. "I feel like this will give me an edge."

DePaul's chronic illness initiative explored the challenges that students with chronic illnesses face in the workplace at the fifth annual chronic illness, and post-secondary education symposium. Titled "After Graduation: Creating Opportunities for Employment, Education, and Community and Family Involvement," the daylong symposium included workshops and speakers covering a number of topics, among them empowering students with chronic illness to make good choices about their future, improving the skills of those who advise students with chronic illnesses, and educating employers about reasonable accommodations for workers with chronic illnesses. Washington, D.C.

One session focused on "Access, Accommodations, and Advocacy: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in the Workplace." Speakers discussed what types of chronic illnesses might allow for access to ADA protections, the various types of reasonable accommodations available for individuals with chronic illnesses in the workplace, and the process



CECELIA REYES EARNED A BACHELOR'S DEGREE FROM DEPAUL UNIVERSITY.