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Independent Study & Mentorship

Mr. Speice 4A

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Interview Assessment #1

Name of Professional: Grace Hathaway

Profession: Producer

Company: Twitchy Dolphin Flix

Date of Interview: 9/28/16

My first interview was conducted with Grace Hathaway, a producer and editor at an independent film company in Austin called Twitchy Dolphin Flix. Our meeting was impromptu because I was visiting my sister at the University of Texas at Austin when I realized that the Austin Revolution Film Festival was happening at the hotel I was staying at. Luckily, she let me interview her right then when I asked and happens to be a producer, one of the professions I am interested in learning about in my chosen field. I hope to be introduced to a multitude of different jobs within this field, so I will be able to know the industry inside out.

From the interview, I learned about the importance of being a quick problem-solver. Ms. Hathaway told me about how her company makes micro-budget films, meaning that they have a small budget and often have to compromise depending on financial restrictions. Being a problem-solver is important as you need to think on your feet when things are aren't going the way it was planned. I realized that no matter how big and well-known of a film production company you work for, there are always problems that are going to arise whether it be budget,

location, or casting. She told me how the trick is that to meet new people and make as many friends as possible. By networking, one can build strong connections and become apart of a solid team that helps each other. In this industry, there is a ton of collaboration; problems can be reduced and be solved more easily with teamwork.

Not only did I learn about important skills one must have in this industry, but I also learned about the pros and cons that comes with having a job in this industry. One benefit is that a person does not have to work specifically in one area, they can take on other duties as well. Ms. Hathaway spoke about her job as a producer as well as some other roles she has such as being an editor and videographer. She also does some photography, design work, and does independent work on the side. While it does take up a lot of her schedule, it allows her to never be bored with her job as she is always doing a variety of duties. By taking on a plethora of jobs, one can attain significant skills in the field. This makes them an asset and very hireable option to companies. Although the industry allows people to channel their imagination and creativity, it allows takes a lot of commitment. In Ms. Hathaway's case, like so many others, she has difficulty balancing her work and personal life since she works for such a small company. She often has to give up plans with friends to work on projects. Not to mention that getting started in this business is a pain in itself. It requires networking, getting your name out there, and competing with others for specific jobs. No matter what job it is, there is always some element of risk. I know now that if I want to accomplish what I set out to do in this industry, I need to be willing to compromise some of my free time and put my career ahead. Another thing that will help me is making more work. I can grow and improve upon myself if I am able to create more original work like films and screenplays as it will only further my education and understanding in film and video production.

The most exciting part of my meeting with Ms. Hathaway was when she told me how she got started. She told me how she got her start in high school when she went to a NYU summer program for film production. She eventually got accepted into the prestigious Radio-Television-Film school at the University of Texas at Austin. There, she met her future colleagues and help start Twitchy Dolphin Flix with them as soon as they graduated. It was super cool hearing her describe her coworkers as a family how fun it is to work and bounce ideas off of each other. I realized that working alone is not possible in this industry. It is too much for a single person to take on every role and be perfect at it. I need to identify where my strengths lie and find people who can fulfill jobs that I am not particularly good at. It is important that I utilize other people and resources so I can maximize the potential success for my projects.

From now on, I am going to incorporate some more group work in my projects so I can obtain more experience in collaboration and also see how my films have been improved because of it. As I grow throughout this year, I now know that this field is an even bigger undertaking than I anticipated. However, I can still be successful if I stay ambitious, passionate, innovative, and believe in myself.