

INTERNnet Impact Awards

By Symone C. Skrzycki

Fangfang Li

Outstanding Intern of the Year (College)



What colleagues at the International Center of Indianapolis (ICI) found so remarkable about Fangfang Li during the internship she completed last year – along with her positive attitude, team-oriented approach and strong work ethic – was her command of the English language, particularly impressive given her background. She was born and lived in China prior to moving to the United States in 2006 to attend college.

Major projects at ICI included conducting a presentation for a cultural training session on China (“Fangfang’s cultural knowledge and proficiency in Mandarin were extremely important assets,” stresses chief operating officer Kathy Humphrey) and leading a rebranding initiative.

“That’s huge because it includes an entire revamp of the (ICI) web site, all of the (marketing) materials and our whole approach to how we look at ourself,” she relates.

Humphrey cites maturity as one of Li’s most valuable traits.

“I’m talking about understanding issues without having the business experience,” she comments. “I don’t see that in a lot of people who have been working for five or 10 years.”

Li graduated from the University of Indianapolis in December with a communication degree and joined ICI as its communications and marketing specialist.

Humphrey declares, “She had a chance to prove herself and she passed with flying colors.”

Emily Miller

Outstanding Intern of the Year (High School)



Many people enter the health care field aspiring to make a difference. Brownsburg High School senior Emily Miller already has.

While interning at Hendricks Regional Health (HRH) last fall, she helped ease a patient’s surgery concerns by demonstrating an important quality – compassion – that will serve her (and others) well in the medical profession.

“Emily was instrumental that day,” supervisor Lea Ann Varvel, a nurse, recalls. “They struck up a good rapport. That was (helpful) in comforting the patient.”

Shadowing Varvel, Miller observed surgeries, pre- and post-operative care and immediate recovery. She also did some clerical work.

Miller says she loves the thrill that working in the medical arena offers.

“I’ve known since second grade that I wanted to go into the medical field,” she confides. “Every day, you’re seeing something different and every day you’re becoming more knowledgeable about the information you’re working with.”

Ultimately, Miller desires a career as a trauma surgeon. First, she plans to major in nursing at Indiana University to “have a job to fall back on.”

Miller’s learning at HRH continues this spring with internships centered on respiratory therapy and emergency room care.

Jeremy Podany

Outstanding Career Services Professional of the Year

Whether he’s organizing career fairs, partnering with businesses to place students in meaningful internships or providing career guidance, Jeremy Podany is passionate about building connections.

Podany is director of career services at the School of Informatics and Computing at Indiana University-Bloomington. His efforts draw accolades from employers and students alike.

All winners are pictured with Zaida Monell, Indiana INTERNnet board member.

Katie Smith, manager of college recruiting at ExactTarget, emphasizes, “Not only does he go the extra mile when it comes to learning about ExactTarget’s hiring needs and the type of candidate profile we are looking for, (but) he has taken a personal interest in my professional development.”

Nick Baker, an Informatics masters student preparing to graduate this year, credits Podany with steering him in the right direction when he faced a career crossroads. Unsure whether to pursue a full-time consulting position or attend graduate school, he sought Podany’s input.

After speaking with one of Podany’s contacts in the consulting field to learn more about the profession, he decided that graduate school, for him, was the best route.

Reflecting on his graduate studies, Baker asserts, “This is a decision that will make a huge impact on the rest of my life.”



International Center of Indianapolis Outstanding Employer of the Year (not-for-profit)

Participating in foreign dignitary visits. Planning prestigious galas. Accompanying leaders from across the globe to local events. These are just a few of the ways the International Center of Indianapolis (ICI) exposes interns to business opportunities with foreign cultures.

“For students to get involved in things like that is just amazing,” praises Brian Landis, managing director of the Butler Business Accelerator.

“At Butler University, the College of Business students have to do two professional internships to graduate,” he explains. “One of the concentrations they can take is international management. We think the internship program at the International Center is far and away the best internship for international management students.”

Internships are student driven. Participants receive assignments based on their interests and build portfolios containing goals, achievements and positive feedback. Some projects, like the recent creation of an intern orientation guide, emphasize teamwork.

Students play a major role in recruiting other interns to ICI by visiting area universities to share their experiences and showcase projects. They also participate in the interview and selection process.

Another focus at ICI is cultivating relationships with interns. Students are encouraged to participate in a variety of social events and staff members serve as mentors.



Kathy Humphrey accepts the award for the International Center of Indianapolis.

ExactTarget Outstanding Employer of the Year (for-profit)

What stands out most to Spencer Abrams about his summer internship at Indianapolis-based ExactTarget (a digital marketing company)? The people.

“The enthusiasm everyone brings to their job is unparalleled to anything I’ve ever seen,” he states. “People don’t care if you’re the intern or the CEO. It’s not just shaking hands (once) and you’ll never talk to them again. They’ll stop you in the halls and ask how you’re doing and how your projects are going.”

Along with providing a warm atmosphere, ExactTarget assigns each intern an “ET ambassador” to act as a mentor. In addition, the company hosts a speaker series covering a wide range of topics such as social media and defining one’s personal brand.

Abrams – who is pursuing an MBA concentrating on finance and strategic management at Purdue University – worked in the sales enablement department. Among his responsibilities was coordinating a changeover of data files from ExactTarget’s intranet to a site the sales team uses to interact with clients and track leads.

This summer, Abrams will complete a second internship. The position hasn’t been determined yet, but he is considering his options and looks forward to returning.



The ExactTarget honor is accepted by Katie Smith.