

The Enterprising Internships Programme gives students the opportunity to work in a Social Enterprise within the West Midlands during the summer.

**Rachel Eggington – MA Social Work (1<sup>st</sup> Yr)**



Working as a 'Research Evaluation' Intern, Rachel's role involved carrying out an independent evaluation of the Transforming Lives project run by the Crossroads Trust (a peer mentoring programme for ex-offenders). Rachel was involved in collecting data via interviewing ex-offenders, mentors and volunteers the organisation liaises with.

**What were your main achievements?**

'My main achievement during the internship was completing the evaluation of the Transforming Lives project. It was hard to visualise what the evaluation would look like when I first started the internship but as I went through the process, slowly I was able to start seeing the end result. The fact that the directors of Crossroads Trust were so pleased with the evaluation made it feel like an even bigger achievement.'

**(John Beesley – Employer)**

*'It's always good when someone comes in from the outside as they are able to share ideas. The recommendations Rachel has made in the evaluation are things that what we can look to take forward.'*

**What did you enjoy most about your internship?**

'The thing I enjoyed the most was getting to meet such a diverse range of people. It was interesting to be able to hear service user stories and the reasons behind them becoming involved with Crossroads.'

**Skills you developed?**

'The internship has enabled me to develop a wide range of skills which will be a real asset to me in future employment. Academically I have been able to develop my writing skills and have gained experience in producing an independent evaluation. This involved me using time management, problem solving and progress monitoring skills. The internship has also enabled me to develop my people skills & communicative skills.'



**Benefits to future career?**

'In terms of social work, the internship has given me the opportunity to work with a group of people which I had little experience with previously. I have also been given the opportunity to apply to get the evaluation published in an academic journal as well as the opportunity to write an article for an academic book. Having my work published would be a real asset in terms of giving my academic writing credibility and giving me the experience to obtain employment within research positions in future.'

*'Doing an internship at Crossroads Trust gave me a really unique experience that allowed me to develop confidence in myself and allowed me to see the workings of a truly inspiring organisation.'* (Rachel - Student)