

Interview with Matthew Moeller

for HUM 2504: Introduction to American Studies, Prof. Emily Satterwhite, Spring 2010

Occupation: Assistant Director of Marketing and Promotions, Jamerson Athletic Center, Virginia Tech

Time and Place: March 30, 2010, 3:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Jamerson Athletic Center, Blacksburg, Virginia

Interviewer: Matthew Klepeisz, senior Communications major from Yorktown, Virginia, and Vanina Alanes, senior Accounting and Finance Major from Annandale, Virginia

MM= Matthew Moeller

MK= Matthew Klepeisz

VA= Vanina Alanes

VA: Alright, um, will you please state your name, your job title, and the name of the organization you work for?

MM: My name is Matt Moeller and I'm the Assistant Director of Marketing and Promotions, and I work for the Virginia Tech Athletic Department.

VA: How long have you worked at your current job?

MM: Uh, the end of this spring will be my four year anniversary here.

VA: Would you please tell me a little about your family background?

MM: I'm originally from Iowa. My entire family is from Iowa. My dad is a, uh, works for the state penitentiary back in Iowa and my mom is a legal consul back in Iowa.

VA: Um, how, would you describe in detail a typical day at your job?

MM: For what we do, a typical day is very difficult just because when you go to work it's going to be different every day. Easiest thing to explain what we do is we kind of, we all come in, we kind of know exactly what need to start working on, but we'll each fill out a to do list and we just kind of go based on that. Every day is going to be different and it's sports marketing.

VA: How did you come to have this job?

MM: I originally graduated from Northern Iowa with an undergraduate degree in Marketing Management. Following undergrad, I went to VCU to get my Masters in Sports Leadership and an individual that worked in the ticket office at VCU used to work in the ticket office at Virginia Tech so he knew the Associate AD, Tim East, and they were, at that point, looking to hire a Marketing Assistant/GA and so I took that position out of grad school for about a month, month and a half or so, and then they promoted me to Assistant Director.

VA: Nice.

VA: Is your job physically demanding?

MM: It can be. Most of our time is spent in the office, whether it's on the computer thinking of new ideas, on the phone. Part of it, as far as events, and then actually going and getting some of the promotional material, going out and going to the loading dock and taking things to events can be physically demanding at times, but majority of it is in the office, which is not physically demanding.

VA: What do you like best about your job?

MM: I would say two things. The people you work with, in this type of job where you're possibly working 60-70 hours a week, it's very important to work with individuals you enjoy coming to work every day and working with. The second part is working with my coaches. Having and building relationships make it a lot easier to work with them day in and day out.

VA: What do you like least about your job?

MM: The hours.

VA: The hours?

MM: Yes. In the summer, it's nice because it's kind of like a teacher. You get to take a lot of time off and that's normally when we take our vacation. But about 9 months out of the year, there's a good chance you're working 60-70 hours a week. And you don't get paid overtime.

VA: Oh no.

MM: Laughs.

VA: You were staffed on the aftermath of 4/16. How did that affect you?

MM: As far as what we do, it didn't affect us a whole lot. The biggest change that we kind of noticed was attendance at our sporting events actually took an increase. It seemed a lot more people wanted to come out and support Virginia Tech. So that was a, individually we didn't really get affected, it was more the attendance at our events got affected.

VA: Ok.

VA: What is your best memory about working at this position?

MM: Um, I'd say my best memory is um, a lot of my sports are Olympic sports. And so it's not football or men's basketball where you're going to sell out and stuff like that. And so volleyball and wrestling were two of my sports that when I came here were only averaging about 200 fans or so. Since I've been here, we've increased it dramatically. And in the last 2 years, we've set attendance records for those sports. Volleyball, we set it last year at 3,000 and 2 years ago at wrestling we set theirs at close to 2,000.

VA: Oh. That's cool.

VA: How do you feel about the hierarchy of your work environment?

MM: I think our hierarchy is very knowledgeable here. They definitely help us out. The biggest thing that kind of affects us is a lot of our upper administration is an older generation and so their thoughts aren't necessarily the new school thoughts. And so sometimes it's tough to get our ideas past them just because they're thinking one way and we're trying to think how things are supposed to be happening now.

VA: Now, mhm

VA: What is one project that would want to be on but haven't been able to? due to funding restrictions or any other barriers.

MM: Umm, one of our administrative policies is fundraising and stuff. They don't necessarily want to host certain events to benefits groups, just because if you do one group more groups are going to come

VA: looking for the same thing

MM: Then they have different events and everything. We do a breast cancer awareness event, for most of our sports however we are unable to fundraise, and so umm... I would love to be able to actually fundraise and donate money towards a breast cancer research center or something like that. But right now with our policy that's not really a possibility.

VA: Oh

MK: So, where do you live and what costs are involved for you getting to work, like transportation, child care, and clothing?

MM: I live probably five minutes from work, I live in Blacksburg. Umm so there is really not a whole lot of costs, I mean it's a five minute drive.

MK: Can you please talk about a bit about how your work affects your family life or how your family life affects your work.

MM: Mmm, it's difficult because right now as a single individual, I don't really have too much of a family right here. It's tough to visit with my family and everything back in Iowa, just because the only times I have really available to go see them is in the summer. Over Christmas we do get about a two week break that I can go visit them, other than that its tough to visit them throughout the year.

MK: If you could change one of the following things about your work, would you change the wages, the benefits, the schedule, the location, the availability of child care, the availability of health care, the kinds of people you work with, or something else?

MM: I would probably say the wages. I think I have gotten used to the long hours and stuff and its just something that going into this industry you kinda know your going to put the hours in to get everything set up, and then you actually have to go to the event which makes the extra hours and everything. umm however, you wish that you could get compensated for those long hours.

MK: What do you think is the most important thing for people to know about what you do?

MM: It's not as glamorous as everyone thinks, a lot of people and we see this when we do have a job opening. How many people apply and people that have no experience doing what we are doing. And just think that they can come in and do what we do. Not saying that we are geniuses or its that tough but I don't think people understand the hours that we put in and all the effort that we put towards getting people to events.

MK: Do you think the amount of work equals the pay you receive?

MM: Absolutely not

MK: laugh

MK: On the same lines then, what advice would you give to somebody who is considering your line of work?

MM: They definitely need to get the experience, intern. People that intern in our office, obviously, I think you've gotten some feedback from us. If you are trying to get into this industry you have to love it and you have to understand the amount of pay you're going to receive. The amount of hours you are going to have to work and how long its going to take for you to climb ladders. To reach where you want to go professionally. Like I said, it kinda goes back to people kinda looking from afar at what we do and thinking its glamorous and stuff like that. Our interns think once they come here and get the experience and start to see the amount of effort we put towards doing everything and get a better feel. If it's something they obviously still want to do, I think it's a great experience for them.

MK: Ok, so where do you uh see yourself in five to ten years?

MM: Hopefully

MK: Laugh

MM: Hopefully the head of a marketing department or upper administration. But like I said it's tough to get to that level in this industry just because there is just so many people all across the nation trying to apply for your job and stuff. When jobs come open and you apply, it's tough to compete with everyone. You have to have different qualities about yourself and be able to show results.

MK: Alright, do you have anything else you'd like to share, is there anything you think we missed or didn't ask?

MM: I think you guys did a wonderful job

VA: Thank you

MK: Thanks