



Alumna Subject Graduated Place of Work Position
Nitya Rajan
Biology with Science Communication
2008
HuffPost Live
Community Screener



I am currently working as a Community Screener for HuffPost Live, which is a live online show for Huffington Post. It's a great opportunity to be here at the start of something that has not been done before in the news/media industry. I'm looking forward to seeing how my role evolves and also working with the show's talented producers and hosts. I am also an avid performer/singer/songwriter www.facebook.com/nityarajan

Great minds *go on to* great places

Did you apply to other universities, and what were your reasons for choosing RHBNC?

Yes, I applied to a mixed bag of universities, both in London and elsewhere. However, RHBNC was the only one that offered the course I wanted to do which was the priority for me – Biology with Science Communication (science journalism).

What else attracted you to the College?

I loved the campus, its proximity to London and the vast number of music centric clubs for students, especially since I am a singer/songwriter. I always enjoyed science, but knew I wanted to experiment with media and journalism, to see if I would be good at it. This course gave the perfect opportunity to do so, with plenty of learning opportunities to develop my strengths and weakness across an array of subject matters.

What do you wish you had been told whilst you were a student?

Something I am really glad I realised right at beginning of university is that the course is so much more than just learning. Royal Holloway's program, while giving students a great grounding in an area of expertise is also invaluable in building a strong network of colleagues and friends in social, professional and extracurricular circles. Take the time to pursue as many opportunities the university provides both on and off campus.

Were you involved in any clubs or societies?

I was musical director for the Royal Holloway University, Gospel choir – one of the most awesome experiences to date. I still carry around the memories of late night rehearsals, missing sheet music and road trips in and out of London for performances. I'm based in NYC at the moment and still perform some of songs we sang as a choir as part of my current set – in various NYC lounges and bars. Covering everything from Sister Act to Amazing Grace, the club gave me the opportunity to meet a group of talented students, all juggling course work and exams, while developing their own talents as singers, performers and musicians. In my very personal (and of course biased opinion), its one the best clubs at RHBNC.

What are your fondest memories of being a student/being in your department?

There are probably too many, but I loved the summer ball in the Founders Squad – dancing till dawn and then watching the sunrise, followed by a full cooked breakfast at the end of it all in the Founders dining hall. Since I am musically inclined, I also enjoyed our trips to weddings and corporate events in and around London to perform.

What was life like at Royal Holloway?

Since the university is campus based, I enjoyed bumping into friends everyday in and around lectures, club meetings, sports events and socialising. Unlike some universities, where fresher's week is the most you'll see of some class mates, at Royal Holloway, there is a strong sense of community.

What is the most important thing that RHBNC has taught you either as a person or in your career?

Pursue every opportunity, walk through the doors that are open, never mind the doors that close and value the relationships around you. I learned some great general skills that I still use on a daily basis such as research, communication and scientific analysis and broadcasting skills in terms of filming, editing interviewing and presenting.

What was your favourite part of the course? Why?

Combining science with media. It helped me discover what my strengths were. The tutors were also extremely supportive, with their open door policy being immensely helpful during dissertation time!

I also loved the lab sessions and field trips, which helped put into context the theory we were being





people with passion

“It offers great courses and a campus life teeming with opportunities; what more could you want?!”



taught. As part of the science communication content, we were also given license to go out and film and cover stories that were of particular interest to us. Again, the tutors were always extremely supportive with giving valuable feedback and insight into how to improve our standard of coursework.

Did you undertake an internship/work placement whilst studying?

Yes, I worked with BBC Radio science unit after securing a runner up place in their 'New Voice of the Year' competition, for which I had submitted a radio package on the African Rift Valley. I presented and produced the package whilst at Royal Holloway.

How do you feel your internship enhanced/improved your employability?

The broadcast skills I had picked up were invaluable and it gave me a good standing in interviews since I could practically demonstrate my capabilities. My time at Royal Holloway has helped enormously with my career!

What has been your career path since graduating?

I have pursued the media/broadcast journalism route. I was given a scholarship to do a Masters

course in Health and Science Journalism at Columbia University, Graduate School of Journalism, from which I have recently graduated in. I'm looking forward to working with HuffPost Live soon.

Please tell us about your current role.

I'm currently an Associate Producer with Beet.TV – filming, editing and covering news in the digital, technology and video journalism space and I use the skills I learned during the practical sessions of my science communication classes at Holloway. My favourite part is being able to interview people at the cutting edge of this industry. I'll be working with HuffPost Live soon and am excited to be using my broadcast and research skills in this role too.

How has Royal Holloway helped you get where you are today?

It has given me a strong skill set that I still use today and more importantly, the course and it tutors developed my skill set so that I could use it confidently after graduation. Outside of academia, I am an avid performer/singer/songwriter and the opportunities at Royal Holloway definitely gave me more confidence to develop stage presence, something I use now as I perform in NYC based bars/pubs such as 'The Bitter End'.

Why do you choose to support the College financially?

Mainly because it gave me a lot, and I like to give back in some way. I'm extremely proud to be part of this network. I was an Annual Fund Caller and I remember what it was like to connect with the broad network of alumni. It was such a pleasure to get that call, I enjoyed hearing about their experience of Royal Holloway as well as to be on the other side of the fence and be able to actually say 'yes; I can give'.

Why is it important to you to do a profile and to remain involved in your College?

It's a great university and formed the foundation of much of what I have achieved thus far. The facilities are also great, whether it is studying in the Founders library, or kick boxing at the gym, there is a range of resources that students can tap into. Even as an alumna I still enjoy being kept up to date with College news from Higher magazine, it's a great read.

Do you think it's important to support your alma mater?

Yes absolutely! I encourage other alumni to get involved either with their time, by supplying profiles, giving careers advice, providing internships or by financially supporting it. I recommend it to my contacts as a great place to study. It offers great courses and a campus life teeming with opportunities; what more could you want?!



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