

My Internship in Michigan

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While interning with Bryce Bedah at Decibel Production LLC in Ypsilanti, Michigan, I had the unique opportunity to learn using a multifaceted system that included an audio section and a video section. In the audio section, I learned how to record a song from start to finish. In the video section, I learned how to use a video camera correctly and professionally, and I learned how to use premier pro to edit video. After taking countless pages full of notes and doing courses with my brother for hours, I completed some project that I was really proud of.

Recording a song from start to finish was a task that I've been through before in a way, but this time, I had the opportunity to work in a professional studio environment with a producer. He and my mentor also helped me find my voice in a way by pushing me to my limits during every session, and giving me the encouragement that would help me step out of my comfort zone and improve my craft. He taught me months, even years worth of information that will help me to succeed in producing my own songs. I grew more and more comfortable with using a DAW, and when I have more of my own equipment, I'll be ready to use Logic Pro to produce my own music. My producer taught me the stages of songwriting: Inspiration, Creation, Recording and tracking, Sequencing and programming, Mixing, and Mastering. In order to begin producing and recording any song, an EP, or even an album, you need to be inspired. Inspiration can come from anything or anyone, as long as whatever it may be makes you feel *something*. Then, you need to bring that inspiration into a physical concept that can be put into the world, and create something out of it. Once you have the concept for the song, and you've given it a skeleton, you can begin the recording and tracking process. The goal of this step is to capture a performance of the song by recording the various instruments and voices that will be put into it on different tracks. This step is similar to sequencing and programming, where you program the analog and/or digital notes and sounds to play in melodic and rhythmic patterns, which are then arranged using a machine to play it back, instead of a person or group of people playing their instruments live. Then comes the mixing step of the process, where you adjust the levels on each track/stem, and add signal processing and effects. Finally, the mastering of the song, this is a form of audio post production, where you adjust the overall levels and dynamics of the song, and then limit them to fix any impurities. I was able to go through this process with a producer, where I not only finished a song that I am proud of, but I now have all of the steps to do it all again on my own.

During the first week of my internship, I learned how to use a video camera for the first time. I grew more familiar with using the camera settings to adjust things like the aperture, depth of field, shutter speed, and ISO in order to get a clean, clear image with the correct exposure wherever I was. Two days later, I went with my mentor to my first event: an outdoor prom. I learned how to use a gimbal there, which helped me capture smooth pans and worry less about the shots coming out too shaky. Because the event was outdoors, the lighting was changing every few minutes, and that's something I struggled with a lot. I had to get comfortable with quickly adjusting my settings so that every shot would come out exposed correctly with the right frame rate. Our job at the event was honestly really unstructured. We ran around with cameras and tried to just get as many shots as we could, and that was something I grew comfortable with fairly quickly. In the end, the event ended up being a lot of fun, and I was extremely proud of a lot of the shots I took. A few of them even made it into an edit for DJDC Productions. The following weekend, I took some time with a friend of mine to go out to a park and practice taking different types of shots, and filming in a new environment. I uploaded all of the footage into Premiere

Pro, and began editing a short video with those clips. I learned how to color correct, add effects, animate each clip, add text and graphics, use speed ramping, add transitions, mix audio, and correctly export the video. This process took several hours, though the final video was only 1 minute long.

The biggest highlights of this internship were going to an event with my brother and filming with professional equipment, working with a producer to complete a whole song, and meeting Athena Johnson. Athena Johnson is a vocalist in Dames Brown, a musical trio from Michigan. I was given the opportunity to meet her during my last session with Mechial, and it was an experience I'll never forget. She gave me a private vocal coaching session, and I learned a ton of valuable skills and tips from her. The event I went to with my brother was valuable to me in a lot of ways; I was able to experience how diverse other parts of the country are, and I had a lot of fun learning how to do what my brother does and experiencing a day in his life. I was very proud of a lot of the shots I took, because I had only learned how to use a video camera two days prior to the event, and I learned how to use most of the equipment the day of. It was definitely a challenge for me, but I think that I performed really well.

After high school, I want to go to college to get a degree related to social media marketing or music business, because I can turn those things into a career, as well as making them useful to my own success. I want to produce my own music, and be able to eventually make money off of that and impact other people with it. Knowing how to do all of the things I've learned since arriving here will be incredibly useful to me while I'm pursuing this dream of mine. Not only have I gained all of this experience, I've also realised the importance of networking and surrounding myself with people who are doing what I dream to do. I've learned about all of the dedication and risk taking required to pursue a career in the music industry, or any other field in audio and video production. I've genuinely enjoyed my time here, and I never grew bored of any concept I was presented with, especially in the audio section. I met so many influential people who all taught me a lot about what they do as professionals, and each of them gave me some extremely valuable advice as to how I should move forward with my career and my life. This experience has definitely helped me to realise the complicated and frustrating parts of this industry, and where my limits are, but it's also helped me to clarify the things I want for myself and my life.