

My dream of working in New York at the heart of the diplomatic world came true



Thanks to the Marion Bruley Scholarship, Alix Defrain-Meunier interned at the French Consulate in New York. The financial aid was essential for her to carry out her plan of interning in New York. She shares her rich and intense professional experience at the heart of the city which never sleeps with us.

What was your role during your internship at the Consulate General of New York ?

Alix Defrain-Meunier (A.D.) : As Deputy Press Officer of the Press and Political Service of the [French Consulate General in New York](#), I had multiple duties.

I was in charge of press relations for six months, during which I prepared the media coverage of official visits and events organised by the Consulate, writing and sending press releases/ press statements, as well as contacting American and French journalists.

I was responsible for the making and presentation of a daily press review to the Consulate General of France in New York, Anne-Claire Legendre. I also regularly monitored the political, economic and social life of the district (New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Bermudes)

What most impacted you during your

internship?

A.D. : Interning at a French administration in a foreign country allowed me to discover the diplomatic world. It enabled me to familiarize myself with the missions of a public administration responsible for the execution of France's foreign policy. Two events in particular impacted my experience at the Consulate: the first at the General Assembly of United Nations which takes place annually in September. The second is the American presidential campaign and election. To find myself at the heart of a Democrat city during the election of Donald Trump was thrilling. It allowed me to observe the political functioning of the United States and to follow American news in unique circumstances.

How did you like New York ?

A.D. : New York is an extraordinary city for its architecture, its varied neighbourhoods, the cultural vibrancy. « There's something in New York which makes sleep unnecessary » ("Il y a quelque chose dans l'air de New York qui rend le sommeil inutile") : these words written by Simone de Beauvoir perfectly illustrate this city in perpetual motion, where there is always something to do, to see, to listen to, to discover. The French community is significant there: almost 36 000 French are registered and it is estimated there are up to 80 000 French in the the district.

How did you get the Marion Bruley Scholarship ?

A.D. : It was allotted on the basis of academic excellence and financial need by the US Sciences Po Foundation. To win this scholarship was a real privilege/opportunity! It enabled my project of interning in New York to take shape, as the cost of living there is particularly expensive. The biggest hurdle I ran into during my internship was finding housing: it's difficult to find and the price of a room in a shared flat is around 1200 dollars monthly.

How important has this internship been in your career plan ?

A.D. : This internship enabled me to narrow down my academic choices but also my professional preferences. It influenced my choice of a second internship, in London, in an NGO, in order to acquire further experience in the international field, while diversifying the missions I was entrusted with. The internships also allowed me to refine my master's choice to Political Sciences, with a major in International Relations at the [Sciences Po Doctoral School](#). Moreover, this experience reinforced my desire to work in the field of international relations and diplomacy

Interview by Christiane Laloy

[Contact Alix Defrain-Meunier on LinkedIn](#)

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[Intern at the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development \(MAEDI\)](#)