

Alumna Helps Young People Find Ways to Stay, Work and Play in NH

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When Kate Luczko talks to students about her role as Executive Director of Stay Work Play New Hampshire, they often ask her what she does in a typical day. There is no typical day, Luczko said.

“Every day is different, which is one of the things I love the most,” she said.

[Stay Work Play New Hampshire’s website](#) features work and life advice for people in the early stages of their career, as well as links and blog posts about fun things to do in New Hampshire. The organization also runs a series of programs, including the Talent & Internship Summit, NH Internships, the Challenge Grant student loan repayment program, and the annual Rising Stars Awards. The non-profit, which aims to encourage young people to start their careers and make home in the Granite State, has recently hired a part-time staff person. But before this person came on, Luczko said her role at Stay Work Play New Hampshire was like being “a jack of all trades.”

“Among other things, I’m responsible for the website, social media, outreach, organizing events and public relations. We have almost 20 volunteer bloggers, so I’m managing them too,” she said. “It’s a wide variety of things.”

Luczko hasn’t always worked in the non-profit world. After graduating from UNH Manchester with a business degree in 2008, Luczko landed a job at a well-known Boston finance firm.

“It’s what I thought success was supposed to be, but after being there just over three months I realized it wasn’t the right fit for me,” she said.

Luczko moved back to New Hampshire and after trying out a few different jobs, she was hired into a newly-created part-time program director position at the non-profit group New Hampshire Businesses for Social Responsibility. About a year into this position, Luczko took the then-part-time, brand new executive director position at Stay Work Play, which became a full-time job about a year and a half later.

“It’s sometimes as though people view it as being less successful if you go to work for a non-profit because you can’t make the same money as you would at a private company, but at New Hampshire Businesses for Social Responsibility, I was given a lot of autonomy,” Luczko said. “I was creating that position from scratch and I was very much a leader in that position at a young age, which were huge benefits.”

Luczko didn’t take the direct path from high school to college to career, either. She worked for four years before enrolling at UNH Manchester. Because she was a little older than the average college freshman, Luczko said she knew UNH Manchester would be a good fit because it’s such a welcoming environment for non-traditional students.

“I was looking for a different college experience and I knew I would fit in at UNH Manchester,” she said.

Unsure of what she wanted to major in, Luczko took an Intro to Business course on the advice of her advisor, Regina McCarthy. Luczko said she loved the class and decided to make business her main focus of study. While at UNH Manchester, Luczko participated

in two [internships](#), [studied abroad](#) with the UNH in Italy program and was one of the first students on campus to study sustainable business.

In one sustainable business class, students had to start their own New Hampshire-based business, from development to marketing. Having an assignment that took her out of the classroom was a highly valuable experience, Luczko said.

“It was a real-world business experience to be marketing our class’ company to the Manchester business community,” she said.

It also led her to pick a self-designed concentration in sustainable business. Luczko now teaches two classes at UNH Manchester: first year seminar and senior seminar. She works with first year students who are business majors, or those thinking about majoring in business, on career development and job seeking skills, as well as other important skills for college and career preparedness. With the seniors, it’s about preparing for the working world and learning how to set yourself apart from your competition among the most popular major in the country. Luczko said this is an area in which UNH Manchester prepared her well.

“One of the things that has always stuck with me from school, and this is a small thing, but when it comes to giving a Power Point presentation, they taught us that people can’t read and listen at the same time so your slides should be more visual to prompt what you’re going to say, not verbatim of your presentation,” said Luczko. “I think a lot of professionalism is taught at UNH Manchester and students really come out knowing how to run business meetings, how to give a presentation, how to dress, how to interview and how to set themselves apart from other students.”

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