Ocean views, mountain peaks, maritime history, and diversity in arts and culture are just a few of the phrases describing Seattle, Wash., home to Alumnus Cameron Brauer, ’04. A tagline coined by Seattle’s Convention and Visitors Bureau may more aptly describe the city—metronatural: having the characteristics of a world-class metropolis within wild, beautiful natural surroundings. Brauer enjoys city life and all it has to offer but finds the waterfront and mountains just beyond city limits a paradisiacal escape.

Brauer is a business analyst specializing in the conceptual design of large software systems. He is currently working on a project with AT&T in North Seattle providing enhanced services for a targeted body of their business customers. It was a project with Hewlett Packard (HP) that caused Brauer to relocate to the Pacific Northwest in January 2009. The project was a re-design of the State of Washington’s unemployment tax system. Brauer’s work with HP began in Denver, Colo., where he worked in the implementation of an election management system. His background includes a bachelor’s degree in information technology management with a minor in applied ethics from the U of M, Crookston and a master of arts in philosophy with a concentration in ethics from the University of Montana in Missoula.

“When I graduated from the U of M, Crookston in 2004, there were not a lot of jobs in the technology sector,” Brauer says. “So, I decided I would pursue a degree in philosophy and ethics because it was a passion of mine.” All this education is a bit surprising considering Brauer wasn’t really intending to go to college when he was a high school student growing up in Ellendale, N.D.

“In one of my classes, Bruce Brorson told us that a degree in information technology is not a degree that teaches you concrete skills but rather a degree that states you can learn technology quickly,” Brauer shares. “I took that information with me, and what I learned gave me the understanding and the ability to transfer my knowledge to different kinds of technology. It helps me ask the right questions and is an important part of my role as a business analyst.”

His earlier work in Colorado began with the passage of the Help America Vote Act and the need for states to address issues on voter registration and security. “I was responsible for assessing and executing custom action plans for 26 counties in the state,” Brauer explains. “I was also involved in user acceptance testing and quality assurance testing.” The job required travel 4-5 days a week across Colorado.

He accepted the job in Washington after being recruited by Saber Government Solutions, which was

Brauer, pictured at Lake Crescent, was very involved on campus as a student which helped develop his leadership skills and his passion for volunteering.
rebranded as EDS, an HP company—the state and local government division of the corporation. When he completed the project with them, he was offered a role with HP’s Enterprise Services, where he provides business systems analysis on the Next Generation Tax System Project at the Washington State Employment Security Division.

As part of his life in Seattle, Brauer began volunteering for Peace for the Streets by Kids from the Streets (www.psks.org) an organization providing support and services to Seattle area homeless youth and young adults. It is something he enjoys deeply. Today, he serves on their board of directors. “I learned the value and gratification that comes from volunteer work when I was on the Crookston campus,” he says. “The volunteer efforts of Pam Holsinger-Fuchs influenced me in a big way, and volunteering has become an integral part of my life.”

Brauer is not just comfortable in his surroundings, he is at home. He describes work as both challenging and fun and his life outside of work is filled with activities he enjoys and the scenery he loves – a mix of all the right elements in an equation that equals success.

Best interns EVER...

For college students, internships play a very important role in determining the next step in one’s life. This is no different for senior Jill Zelinsky, intern for University Relations at University of Minnesota, Crookston. “It’s great to get hands on experience with something that I want to pursue as a career in the future. It is awesome to apply what I have learned in the classroom in the past three years to a real work environment,” Zelinsky explains.

Growing up in Minneapolis, going to school in a small town was a big change for Zelinsky. “My twin sister and I always wanted to go to school together, but we could not agree on the right school for both of us.” After being recruited for basketball and visiting the University of Minnesota, Crookston campus, they knew the U of M, Crookston was the right school for them! After graduating with a degree in business management, Zelinsky decided to return to Crookston to finish her degree in communications.

“Andrew Svec contacted me about an internship opportunity with University Relations in the spring and I was immediately interested,” she says.

Written by Senior Jill Zelinsky, intern for University Relations

While working with University Relations, Zelinsky has had the opportunity to write news releases, take photos for the homepage, conduct interviews for Insight Radio, and much more. “This internship has helped me gain self-confidence in different situations that I have struggled with before.”

Another thing that has helped Zelinsky gain confidence and independence was her study abroad trip to London, England. “I went from a small school in Crookston, to the University of London in one of the biggest cities in the entire world!”

Adjusting to a new city and a new culture proved to be fun for Zelinsky. “I thought it would be a lot harder to get around London, but the adventures out in the

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