

My name is Paniz Ghorbani Nabi, and I am currently pursuing an Honours Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at Western University. In the summer of 2025, I completed a 120-hour internship at Childreach, a nonprofit organization in London, Ontario. I held a combined role as Special Project Coordinator and Fundraising Project Coordinator. This opportunity allowed me to contribute to two significant initiatives: the organization's 50th anniversary celebration and the early planning of a silent online auction. My responsibilities included community outreach, digital content creation, donor engagement, and platform organization. The experience not only enriched my skill set but also expanded my understanding of how artistic and communication-based practices can contribute meaningfully to community-driven initiatives.

Childreach supports families and early childhood professionals across London and Middlesex County through a variety of inclusive programs and services. Rooted in principles of play-based learning, child-centred care, and caregiver empowerment, Childreach has built a legacy of community engagement over the last five decades. As an intern, I had the opportunity to immerse myself in the organization's mission while applying my creative and organizational abilities in a dynamic, real-world environment.

As the Special Project Coordinator, I developed and launched a digital memory campaign to commemorate the organization's 50th anniversary. This involved designing a Google Form to collect stories and photos from families, staff, board members, and community partners who had interacted with Childreach over the years. I also created promotional graphics for social media, drafted messaging to encourage participation, and brainstormed creative ways to showcase submissions, including Instagram reels, website galleries, and digital slide presentations. This project enabled me to apply my visual communication skills in a context that was both community-focused and emotionally resonant.

In my role as Fundraising Project Coordinator, I assisted in the development of a silent online auction to be launched in Fall 2025. I reviewed a detailed auction spreadsheet, helped draft donor outreach emails, organized confirmed donations in the 32auctions platform, and offered strategic input on communications. I also created templates for donor recognition and collaborated with staff to make the platform user-friendly and visually appealing. This aspect of my internship exposed me to digital fundraising practices and event planning logistics, and I

learned how important consistency and professionalism are when communicating with potential donors.

Personally, this internship taught me how much I value working in environments that prioritize community and creativity. I've always been drawn to storytelling and visual expression, but this was the first time I used those strengths in service of a nonprofit. I felt fulfilled knowing that my designs, messaging, and organizational contributions were helping build a stronger connection between Childreach and the people it serves. I also learned that I thrive when I have clear goals but flexible space to approach tasks in creative ways. My supervisor, Michelle, trusted me to lead aspects of each project, provided supportive feedback, and encouraged me to think independently—something I found empowering and deeply motivating.

Professionally, this internship helped me better understand my working style and build essential soft skills. I improved my communication skills by writing for public audiences and collaborating with various staff members. I strengthened my time management skills by balancing multiple projects and tasks within a limited number of hours. I became more comfortable using design tools like Canva in a professional setting and navigating new platforms like 32auctions. These skills are highly transferable and will serve me well whether I pursue roles in arts administration, nonprofit communications, or community-based programming.

One moment that stands out to me is the launch of the memory campaign. I had created social media content to introduce the project, drafted the accompanying captions, and scheduled the posts. It was the first time I had led a public-facing initiative from start to finish, and I was both nervous and excited. Seeing people respond—sharing their stories and photos, expressing gratitude—was incredibly rewarding. It reminded me that storytelling is a powerful tool for connection, especially when it's authentic and community-centred. That experience gave me confidence in my communication abilities and solidified my interest in roles where creativity can serve a social purpose.

A challenge I encountered during the internship was navigating the limitations of nonprofit resources. Unlike academic environments where I might have access to premium design software or extended project timelines, I had to rely on free tools and move efficiently within a 120-hour window. This required me to be adaptable and possess strategic qualities that

are essential in professional settings. I learned to make the most of what was available and focus on clarity, accessibility, and impact over perfection.

This internship will have a lasting impact on my future. I now see how my background in Fine Arts can be applied far beyond traditional artistic contexts. I'm interested in continuing to work in roles where design, storytelling, and community engagement intersect—whether in nonprofit communications, arts programming, or public education. I also feel more prepared to navigate professional environments and collaborate with diverse teams. The experience gave me practical insights into nonprofit operations, donor relations, and public-facing communication—all of which align with my interests and strengths.

To students considering an internship, I would say: don't be afraid to take on a role that seems outside your immediate field of study. My position was focused on communications and fundraising, yet it became one of the most enriching and relevant experiences of my academic journey. Internships like this can challenge your assumptions about your career path and open up new possibilities you hadn't considered.