



Current

Past Month

Archive

# CO-OP PUTS STUDENT ON THE SCENE AT PHILLY'S BIGGEST ENTERTAINMENT EVENTS

2014

April

Brett Axler Co-op

March

February

January

2013

2012

2011



Brett Axler worked at a Taylor Swift concert this past summer, among other major Philadelphia entertainment events.

**April 7, 2014**

**By Alissa Falcone**

If there's a high-profile entertainment event in Philadelphia, Brett Axler will probably be there. The entertainment and arts management junior has been on the field during

Philadelphia Eagles home games, walked along the 6abc Thanksgiving Day Parade, heard live music at some of the biggest concerts on and off campus and attended almost every performance at the Philadelphia Fringe Festival for the past two years. How does he manage it? Easy: He's worked on the audio and visual elements for those events.

Axler has used internships and freelance opportunities, in addition to his co-op, to make his way backstage or to the forefront at all of these events. Since his freshman year, he's regularly worked as a game-day video engineer for the Eagles Television Network and as a production and operations manager for FringeArts.

His program allows for two three-month-long summer co-ops, and the schedule has allowed Axler to juggle multiple internships and freelance positions with his schoolwork during the school year. Both of his co-ops have been parlayed into part-time positions during the year.

Recently, Axler accepted and started working on his final co-op. He is the lead audiovisual engineer for the popular Xfinity Live complex, where his duties include the upkeep and programming of more than 100 TVs and projectors, providing audio for high-profile events and working alongside Flyers producers to co-produce the games inside the NBC Sports Arena.

Last summer Axler worked as a production and operations manager and audio engineer for the Philadelphia Fringe Festival for his co-op. He's been involved with the organization since his freshman year and progressed from working only in the summer to working part-time throughout the year. His job duties include taking care of day-to-day operations, coordinating the schedules for 80 audio, lighting and stagehand crew members and working up to 20 shows a summer.

Out of all of those productions, his favorite event to work was FEASTIVAL, the FringeArts benefit that annually brings foodies and top chefs from more than 70 local restaurants together for food and drinks. This year's event was held at Pier 9 on the Delaware River Waterfront.

"What we do as a team is get a week and a half to turn a massive abandoned warehouse into a crazy-beautiful multimillion-dollar gala where we bring in over 1,000 guests," he explained.

Axler coordinated the lighting and the sound for the event, which included music and performance artists. "The food was just an added benefit," he said.

Ensuring that over 1,000 attendees including Mayor Michael Nutter and former Gov. Ed Rendell enjoyed the big night was nothing compared to what Axler hopes to accomplish.

"My ultimate life goal is to be a producer or manager for large-scale venues — capacity for 10,000 people or more — to coordinate light and sound for concerts or sporting events," he said.

His dream job would be to work as the producer for the opening ceremonies of the Olympics.

"I can't really think of any event bigger than the Olympics. It's the largest live event to happen on Earth," he said.

For now, he's working toward his goal through a freelance position doing audiovisual broadcasting at Lincoln Financial Field. He's been on the ground filming for all Eagles 2012-2013 home games, the 2012 and 2013 Army-Navy games and the NCAA Lacrosse Championships. This past summer, he worked as an audio engineer and public address announcer at Taylor Swift's Red Tour concert.

Axler can be found behind the scenes at some of the biggest events on campus as well. Along with three students and John Cooke, associate dean of campus engagement, Axler has helped coordinate the Dragon Concert Series, Midnight Madness and Homecoming concerts every year. This past February, he produced the Drexel Sports Networking Dinner that brought 43-year Philadelphia sports public announcer Dan Baker and professionals from the Phillies, Eagles, 76ers, Flyers and Union to campus for a one-on-one networking event with students.

"I live by the motto 'Live life working now like most people won't, to spend the rest of your life living like most people can't,'" he said. "I work to network and gain experience. I want to get as much out of Drexel as I possibly can, so I can have an awesome future."

That means making certain sacrifices, though.

"I don't sleep," he admitted.

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