Karissa Frye, a Photojournalism Senior recently interned with Climbing Magazine based out of Boulder, Colorado. The Billings native recently had a feature published in the magazine where she interviewed a National Geographic photographer and his guide as they prepared for their trek up Mount Everest without the help of additional oxygen. Check out the Climbing Magazine article and read on to learn more about her internship overall.

What is Climbing Magazine?

“A publication dedicated to rock climbing and outdoor adventure. We produce 10 issues per year, we always include a photo annual and a gear guide. Online media comes secondary, but is being pushed more and more. The stories online are different than the ones we publish in print. That being said, you can find older articles online. They are working on publishing the older stories there. We've got 147,000 followers on Instagram and our circulation per issue is around 45,000.”
What are some of your tasks as an intern?

“My tasks include writing, editing, taking photos, interviewing, transcribing, and other miscellaneous tasks, like finding magazine covers that feature topless climbers (ooh la la).”

Do you get to travel? Meet cool people? Do you get paid to climb?

“I'll be taking my first work trip this week with my editor and a couple of climbers. We are heading to Montana to work on a piece I am writing for the July issue on the Beartooth Mountain Range. We will be climbing, writing, and photographing. I've met a ton of cool people (mostly those that are staff at Active Interest Media,) with the occasional interviews with awesome climbers or mountaineers.”

Why did you decide to take on this internship?

“This was a top choice for my internship. I have always been into adventure sports, rock climbing being one of my favorite hobbies. When you are able to pair your hobbies with your passion (journalism), you know you're in the right place.”

How did you get connected with this opportunity?

“When I started the journalism program at the University, I knew that I eventually wanted to work for an outdoor magazine. When it was time for my internship, I applied to Climbing Magazine and Backpacker Magazine (which are published through the same company). A friend from the U of M journalism program, who now is an editor for Skiing Magazine, walked me through the steps of applying and was a reference for me... Apparently a good one! Thanks Leslie Hittmeier!”

What has been the most rewarding part of this experience?

“I have already learned so much, and it is really great to be able to do what you love in a professional setting. It is incredibly fast-paced compared to school, and I've learned how to be more efficient with my time. Also, my work environment is awesome. The people I work with are so incredibly talented and passionate about what they do. They are genuinely kind, and make me feel confident in the work I produce. I am very grateful for the opportunities they have given me while working here!”
Have there been any challenges you have overcome to get this experience?

“I had to uproot my life from Missoula to Boulder in just a couple weeks, after applying to the position. It was a big transition. I left a great job and a lot of amazing friends in Missoula, but moving to begin your career is usually necessary. Rationing my money for three months with no pay has been the biggest challenge...”

Did the company help you find housing or anything else to help the move go smoother?

“ Nope! I was on my own- on craigslist.”

Were you taking other classes while doing this internship? Or are you done with your classwork?

“I was totally done with classwork when I started at Climbing Magazine.”

What advice would you give other students considering opportunities like this?

“Don't settle for any internship, find one that you will be passionate about because it is hard and sometimes not enjoyable work. Also, make some good playlists, because cubicle life can be a drag without good tunes.”

Has this experience reaffirmed your career goals or has it changed your mind in any way?

“It has definitely reaffirmed my career goals, and it has taught me other directions to take a similar career.”

How has your participation in this AE experience impacted your life as a student and as a person in general?

“This experience has impacted my life in many ways, from moving me to Colorado, to making me feel reassured about my profession.”

What is your next step? Will you be staying in Boulder?

“I'm moving back to Missoula for the summer to make some money, and to look for my next step. I've been chatting with The Outdoor Journal about freelance possibilities, but my main goal is to take a big road trip come fall to produce stories and photos!”

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Describe in one sentence what participating in this experience has been like for you.

“How about one word: RAD.”