



An Empowering Experience **By Alyssa Treff, Intern, fall 2010**

I first became interested in becoming a part of the Susan G. Komen for the Cure mission after I figured out that I was going to be unable to participate in the Komen 3 Day for the Cure in Philadelphia. A bit disappointed, I found my way to the Komen Philadelphia Affiliate's website and saw they were looking for interns for the Fall of 2010. Being an English major, I doubted very much that there would be a role for me at The Affiliate. However, just a few days after my initial interview, I got the call from the office asking me to be an intern for the fall. I was so excited I jumped up and down, scaring my roommate.

I ended up spending almost ten months with the Komen Philadelphia Affiliate, and the experience I had with them is one I will never forget. Whether it was running around the Ritz- Carlton in a ball gown to help relay auction bids, or it was the educational events where I met some survivors-turned-volunteers that would come to be 'Mother Hens to me', all my experiences were invaluable. I soon found I had become part of a family. Interns usually end up running projects by themselves after they have gotten their bearings. For me this was a bit daunting; being my first business internship and my first time having anything other than retail or camp responsibilities. But with the help of the people in the office, I soon found not only my bearings but a confidence that I didn't know I had.

Each event and project was easier than the last as I became comfortable with the office and the projects that were being assigned to me. I later found that each intern is informally assigned to a staff member, which basically meant whichever staff member embraced you in a project, you became his or her temporary assistant. I was assigned to the Volunteer Coordinator and got to see through the eyes of our volunteers, the hope, trust, joy, and knowledge that Komen instills in everyone they touch.

After being there for ten months, my communication skills and confidence soared. Moreover, it was actually through an Affiliate event that I landed the internship I am at now with the American Association for Cancer Research. I am grateful to everyone I met and from whom I learned at the Komen Philadelphia Affiliate: the survivors, the volunteers, the doctors, the staff, even the other interns. I will never forget them and what they did for me.