

## **Fantabulous! Adrian Semerene, Osprey Productions**

Osprey Productions (OP) is a student run organization on campus. More specifically, it is an agency of the student government where entertainment is the major. The mission of this production company, as indicated on its website, are the following: “to provide a variety of entertainment at little or no cost to the student body of the University of North Florida, for the purposes of enhancing campus life and overall student success.” The undergraduate Adrian Semerene, Director of Osprey Productions, has found his mission in life through this organization.

Adrian Semerene came to UNF two years ago. He immediately became involved in OP in his freshman year as a volunteer. In an interview he states that “it is an organization that is easy to become involved with.” He also maintains that OP is just like any other business in that one can work oneself up, just as he has done: during his first year at UNF, he was committee chair; in his second year, he earned the paid position of Assistant Director; and, as indicated above, this year he has the paid position of Director of this organization which puts on two to four major concerts a year, in addition to weekly movies, concerts, lectures and other events such as karaoke and home coming. According to Mr. Semerene, this organization, although it provides stimulation, relaxation, enjoyment, and entertainment, also provides many opportunities for personal and professional growth for those who volunteer and who are paid to work there.

It has been easy for Mr. Semerene to work his way up to the position of Director at OP because he has undergone a transformational experience since working there. When this student first began volunteering at OP, he had aspirations to become an actor.

However, he soon learned from OP that he is more of a “backstage person.” He has discovered that he gains such a great sense of satisfaction from making a contribution to the production of a successful event -- such as a concert -- that this is what he wants to do with his life. Mr. Semerene states, “That’s what I want to do: have my own production company and be a promoter and put on big shows...It’s amazing! I found what I want to do!” The student continues: “This has been such an amazing transformational learning opportunity.” For Mr. Semerene, his life has been transformed because, even though he is only twenty years old, his life had direction and purpose. He goes to OP each day knowing that he is building on his future. Here on the UNF campus he is daily developing skills and contacts for the day when he has his own production company. He states that “One can totally be informed with Osprey Productions.” He elaborates by enumerating the kinds of work experience he is accumulating at OP: he has learned how to book and promote shows; how to create flyers; how to set up the stage correctly, how to coordinate meetings; how to contact outstanding artists; how to do radio and newspaper advertisements; how to write up contracts with knowledge of legal issues; how to take care of security concerns, sound issues, and transportation logistics, as well as how to buy appropriate food for VIPs within a certain budget. He asserts that he has the opportunity to do “anything and everything that is involved in a show” at OP. He feels it is an “amazing, amazing experience.” The director continues, “I’m twenty years old and I’m living a life that many people dream about. It is such a rewarding experience.”

Mr. Semerene also elaborates on how exhilarating it is to have the opportunity to

pick up at the airport and get to know such famous individuals as the comedian Tracey Morgan and the noted musician George Clinton. He exclaims, “We get to do it all! We get to meet all famous people.” He also mentions that he has met Max Weinberg, the Gin Blossoms, and Sister Hazel as well as big name artists such as Yung Joc, Chingy, and Carlos Mencia; he reflects upon these opportunities: “I have had experiences the average person wouldn’t have.” The undergraduate finds these experiences to be very satisfying and confidence building and knows that he may be able to call upon these well known entertainers when he has his own production company. He indicates that he and the other students at OP are making “incredible contacts.” In addition to meeting and working with these remarkable entertainers, OP has been working with an agent in New York City. Mr. Semerene realizes that this relationship will help him tremendously in the future as well. Most individuals must start with no professional contacts when they start their own production company, but Mr. Semerene is pleased that he and the other students at OP already have enough for a good start. He claims, “I’m already established.”

Adrian Semerene indicates that he feels he is working on something larger than himself when he is working at OP and that this work is such a “rewarding” experience which commands a lot of respect. He states that OP is an organization composed of individuals who conduct themselves very professionally and that this professionalism is often recognized. He reports that after the extremely successful presentation of a major concert, a highly esteemed community member telephoned to congratulate Mr. Semerene and his fellow workers. The director mistakenly states during our interview that she said the show was “Fantabulous!” instead of “Fantastic!” the word, in fact, she

did use; however, the word the director misspeaks may be the more appropriate of the two as the production of the show he describes was clearly fabulous and fantastic!

Adrian Semerene is a young undergraduate who feels certain he has found his path in life through working at OP. He would like other students to take this opportunity to be transformed by working at this institution. This wonderful young man is concerned that there is not enough awareness as to the kinds of opportunities that are available at UNF. He states, "There is so much to UNF that people just don't understand." He encourages more students to volunteer at OP, the place on campus where students have the opportunity to "decide everything." He wants more to come to the organization about which he is so compassionate, the place where students can, he asserts, "gain knowledge, experience, fun" as well as enjoy the likelihood of establishing life long friendships (he will be the best man at his colleagues wedding in the near future). Mr. Semerene concludes by stating, "Everything I have learned in college, I have learned through OP." At another point in the interview he asserts, "OP is a TLO. There is no other way to put it. It is the perfect title. I just want the story out there." Adrian Semerene would like other students to join him in his enthusiasm for Osprey Productions and in its mission to enhance the lives and success of the UNF student body.

#### Works Cited

Semerene, Adrian. Personal interview. 8 Aug. 2006.

UNF: Osprey Productions. U. of North Florida. 3 Sept. 2006.

<<http://www.unf.edu/groups/osprod/mainmenu.html>>