

# The CRS Experience

Gaining professional networking skills through a study-away in Nashville



Jessica Spence '18

In spring 2018, a team of Aggies experienced all Nashville had to offer and attended the Country Radio Seminar. Matthey Mannen, an Agricultural Communications and Journalism student at Texas A&M University, participated in the trip.

CRS is an annual convention held at the Omni Hotel in Nashville, Tennessee, annually that brings together industry professionals in radio, related fields, and country music artists to network and learn more about the industry. The week is full of educational seminars and live country music entertainment, said Mannen.

“I came to CRS because I am extremely interested in the music industry—specifically country music—in Nashville,” Mannen said. “I saw this as the perfect time to network and help me get my dream job.”

Mannen, who will graduate in December 2019, has a strong interest in radio and went on the trip with the purpose of networking and finding a summer internship that fit her needs.

“I made so many connections and networked so much,” Mannen said. “There are opportunities here like the mentoring breakfasts. You are able to talk to industry professionals from so many different fields.”

The Aggies were the only students at the conference and manned a head-shot photo booth to take professional head-shots of CRS attendees.

“When we did the photo booth this year, we made a lot of connections—and it wasn’t just business connections, it was also friendship connections that I have made,” Mannen said.

For those interested in the radio and music industry, or any field related to it such as sales, marketing, advertising, public relations, social media, etc., CRS is a beneficial experience that allows Aggies to network with a crowd of industry professionals other students do not have access to. CRS is an experience in itself that allowed the attending students to grow in new ways, Mannen said.

“Long term, I think that CRS will be beneficial in many ways,” Mannen Said, “This was really the first trip where I put myself out of my comfort zone to make those connections.”

Billy McKim, Ph.D., an Agriculture Communications and Journalism professor, has used his vast radio connections to bring Aggies to CRS for several years. Students interested in attending CRS in the spring should contact McKim at [brmckim@tamu.edu](mailto:brmckim@tamu.edu).

