



DREAM SHOT

After internships with the Cleveland Cavaliers, senior Michael Clark is in position to score an NBA career.

*SENIOR MICHAEL CLARK
WAS NEVER A GREAT
BASKETBALL PLAYER.
BUT, WOW, DID HE LOVE
THE GAME — ESPECIALLY
THE CLEVELAND CAVALIERS.*

His favorite childhood memories are of sitting with his mom and dad, watching NBA games on TV. And, wow, did he love the Cleveland Cavaliers.

Even after graduating from high school, he played year-round in YMCA leagues. He knew a spot on the Cavs roster was unlikely. But he still dreamed of one day contributing to the team because, wow, did he love the Cleveland Cavaliers.

In August 2014, Clark will graduate from Kent State University at Stark with a B.A. in communication studies and a likely shot netting the job of his dreams with the Cleveland Cavaliers. Clark worked for the Cavs during the last two NBA seasons while taking Kent State courses online.

NETTING VALUABLE EXPERIENCE

First, as an unpaid intern, then as a paid “seasonal assistant,” Clark earned academic credits by working well over 40 hours a week for the Cavs’ Basketball Communications Department. His responsibilities included researching statistics on the Cavs and their opposing teams and distributing the information to coaches and reporters. He gathered news clippings about the team and sent daily compilations throughout the Cavs organization. He also was assigned to capture game-night quotes from players and coaches.

“I’d go into the visitors’ locker room to record statements and end up alongside superstars, like Kobe Bryant and Kevin Durant, players I grew up admiring,” says Clark. “Those were some breathtaking moments on the job.”

And they sure made it worth the daily two-hour treks between his Massillon home and Cleveland’s Quicken Loans Arena.

“I would arrive at 9 a.m., work a full day at the office, then go to the 7 p.m. game, take care of responsibilities there and drive home at midnight,” he says. “Especially during my unpaid internship, having the support of my wife and family was so important. They knew how valuable the experience would be to my career, even if it meant spending more than \$30 a day on gas and not having time to earn a paycheck elsewhere.”

THE TIPOFF

Clark’s introduction to NBA operations began in 2010. He was majoring in early childhood education at Kent State Stark and working at a Canton sporting goods store. A co-worker had heard



“I can’t stress enough **the importance of pursuing internships**, networking and building relationships in the field you want to enter.”

— Michael Clark, senior communication studies major

that the Canton Charge, the Cavs’ brand-new NBA Development League affiliate, was looking for seasonal workers. Clark jumped at the opportunity and grabbed a part-time job recording game stats and running the scoreboard and shot clock. That’s where Clark met Cavs employees, who were helping train their minor league counterparts.

“The more I talked to them and learned about their jobs, the more I became interested in the communications field and almost fanatical about attaining a career with the Cavs,” says Clark, who quickly switched his major. “I realized how much I could do with a communication degree — public relations, community relations, a whole slew of options.”

Clark credits Kent State Stark for tipping off his career, but knows he’s in position to score his dream job due to his internships.

“I learned about organizational communication and communication theory in class, but I learned how to be a communication professional by observing others who have worked for years in the field,” says Clark. “I’ve tried to draw a little from everyone I’ve worked with. I can’t stress enough the importance of pursuing internships, networking and building relationships in the field you want to enter.”

“I BELONG HERE.”

While most students use internships to bolster their resume for a job search, Clark hopes his will do something else. He has already applied for a full-time, permanent position with the Cavs.

“I’ve worked really hard to make myself an asset to the Cavs,” he says. “My passion is to gain a position with the team I’ve followed my whole life. Thanks to my internships, I know I belong here.”