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## Air Time

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**UP TO SPEED**

It's Anna Sugg's job to be immersed in the 2016 Presidential campaign.

It's 7:30 p.m. when Anna Sugg '12 answers the phone for an interview. She's still at work—a fact underscored by the background murmur of co-workers' conversations and TVs tuned into various news networks—and she's been there for about 12 hours. "Work-life balance doesn't really exist," Sugg says with a chuckle, "but I knew that going in."

Sugg is the director of television for the Republican National Committee (RNC), and on this June evening, she's in the middle of the maelstrom that is the 2016 presidential election cycle. From an initial field of 17 candidates, Donald Trump has just wrapped up his nomination as the Republican presidential candidate; Democratic presidential

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*Anna Sugg shapes election discourse.*

BY ANDREW HUANG '11

candidate Hillary Clinton has just delivered her national security address; the Republican National Convention is six weeks away. It's a busy time to be involved in US politics.

Sugg is no stranger to the frenetic pace of politics. Three weeks after graduating from Furman with a double major in political science and communication studies, Sugg signed on to work as a media

specialist at Gov. Mitt Romney's presidential campaign headquarters in Boston. Before that, Sugg interned with Sen. Jim DeMint, the Media Research Center, and The Heritage Foundation. In between the Romney campaign and her current job with the RNC, she was a booker at Fox News Channel. In short, Sugg has amassed a breadth of experience uncommon for

her 26 years—but that's been by design.

"I grew up watching 'The Today Show' and the 'Nightly News' all the time, and a lot of Fox and CNN, and I always knew I wanted to work (at the juncture of media and politics)," she says. "I knew I needed to start internships early. A US senator told me once that if you want to work in DC, you need to get there as early as you can, go back as often as you can, and work as hard as you can."

For the 2016 election cycle, Sugg isn't as directly involved with individual candidates, but that's because her work with the RNC is focused on party-level strategy and coordination. "When we had 17 candidates, the unifying voice of the party was my

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boss (chairman Reince Priebus)—“What does the chairman of the Republican Party think?” He’s my responsibility when it comes to TV,” she says. Sugg’s day-to-day duties may also include editorial pitches to news networks, helping book guests, media briefings, interview preparation, media training, and following up with on-air corrections. “I’m essentially the point of contact for TV producers to the RNC,” she says. “We’re focused on how to promote our values while contrasting them with the Dems.”

That requires Sugg to stay on top of all the news coverage around the election. “I have four TVs that are mine at work. I am always watching something,” she says. “It’s situational awareness. It’s why I’m here for 14 hours.”

There is, of course, a significant payoff for all the hours in the office and sleepless nights. “When I take a step back, I realize I’m getting to be in the middle of the cycle . . . I realize the things I do matter on a national scale. That’s pretty cool.” ●



## TRIPtych

*A glimpse of my semester in Edinburgh*

BY SARAH COOKE '17

**C**ulture, creativity, and coffee shops: my three favorite aspects of my semester in Edinburgh, Scotland. The country’s culture of independence enhanced my participation in classes, my internship at a theater, and my ability to explore. Performances, personal interactions, and photography fed my creative spirit.

**1 Sunrise at Seat:** 4 a.m. was my wake up call, and 5:20 a.m. was the sunrise. On the last day of our trip, two of my friends and I traversed to Arthur’s Seat, the extinct volcano located in the middle of Edinburgh. The sunrise was a sight to behold. We could see the entire city from the mountains to the water, and it took my breath away that I had been living in Edinburgh for an entire semester.

**2 Bagpipe Dreams:** Scotland taught me how to live on my own, and I recognized strengths within myself that I might not have capitalized on before. I felt more autonomous and like a more developed person. This bagpiper was on the Royal Mile, the main street in Old Town, Edinburgh. I admired his dedication to his craft and his willingness to step into the limelight. We all need to be our own bagpipers; we need to stand tall, face our fears, and live our dreams.

**3 Highland Magic:** The Scottish Highlands are the most beautiful place that I’ve ever experienced, and I marvelled in the wonderful nature that was within my grasp. We visited many locations including Glen Coe (with a picturesque scene from Skyfall) and Glenfinnan (with the viaduct from the Harry Potter series). My favorite image from the trip is this one I took from the window of one of our bus rides.

