During the summer 2013 after my junior year, I interned at 北陸放送 (Hokuriku Broadcasting Company), which is the oldest private station on the west coast of Japan that broadcasts via both television and radio. My eight-week internship consists of four parts: one week in アナウンス部 (Announcement Department), two weeks in テレビ制作部 (Television Production Department), two weeks in ラジオ部 (Radio Department), and three weeks in 報道部 (Reporting Department). Each department offered me a unique experience of work in mass media.

First, I stayed shortly at アナウンス部 (Announcement Department), which is the department of announcers. During my time there, I learned standard Japanese pronunciation from professional announcers by reading textbook, reading news, singing, or simply talking. I thought pronunciation was relatively an easy part in Japanese language since Japanese has a small number of vowels and consonants, but I realized later that if you want everyone to understand your Japanese by just listening, it is not easy at all. I came to understand that how difficult an announcer’s job is, for they have to not only convey information as clearly as possible, but also work under great pressure and prepare for everything, such as estimate reading time, mark scripts, check pronunciation, adjust for images, and etc., in order to prevent unexpected situations during live broadcasting. The pronunciation training was proved to be extremely helpful for my later internship.

Next was テレビ制作部 (Television Production Department), which is primarily producing a live weekly one-hour variety show called 絶好調. For my two-week stay there, I mostly followed directors as they went around Ishikawa prefecture and shot videos about tourist attractions, local cultures, special events, and commercials for the variety show. Participating in location shooting enabled me to know more about Japanese culture and realize when I was observing directors as they tried to create interesting images to entertain audience that the purpose of variety show is not purely introducing a variety of things, but making people laugh while exposing to something new. Besides that, I learned editing footages by separating images and voices, adding subtitles and sound effects, and so on. I also learned shooting techniques and made my own video for practice. When I was watching the variety show on television afterwards, I was very touched as I thought about how much effort directors had put.

Then I transferred to ラジオ部 (Radio Department), which is chiefly in charge of a live daily radio broadcast called おいどいわ. When I was there, from Monday to Wednesday, I stayed in the studio, observing the live broadcast in the morning and making my own radio program with help from a director in the afternoon. From the topic, to the narration, the background music, the recording, the editing, and finally the CD, creating my own radio program is a very enjoyable process. On Thursday and Friday, I was invited as a guest speaker to talk on おいどいわ on the radio car with an announcer. The radio car went around Kanazawa city for new products, special events, or commercials. Travelling around with the radio car and given the opportunity to speak on the air, I enjoyed the beauties of Kanazawa and learned that although speaking on radio needs quick reaction and descriptive language, it is actually very relaxing without facing audience or cameras, like chatting with friends, except that many people can hear you.
Last but not least, I went to 報道部 (Reporting Department), which is making a live daily news report called レオスタ. These last three weeks was the most challenging because I had to create my own five-minute program and report live on television, but it turned out to be very rewarding after all. The first week was similar to the experience in the television production department that I accompanied reporters to gather information and data for the daily news report. From the second week, I spent most of my time making my own program. With help from a reporter and cameramen, I researched on the topic, structured the program, scheduled with interviewers, wrote the narration, and went to shoot videos. At the very last day of my internship, I was on television for about seven minutes, reporting my program. My appearance on レオスタ was the peak of my internship.

After this memorable two months, I improved my Japanese language skills, experienced working at a Japanese company, knew more about mass media in Japan, learned more about Japanese culture, and most importantly, had great fun in Hokuriku Broadcasting Company.