

SALISBURY, MD---Two Salisbury University students will have front-row seats at this year's Republican and Democratic national conventions ... though they may not do much sitting.

Senior communication arts major Jessica Cahill of Severna Park, MD, was selected as an intern for the Republican National Convention, scheduled August 27-30 in Tampa Bay, FL. Senior communication arts major Chelsea Brown of Coeur D'Alene, ID, was chosen to intern with the Democratic National Convention, set September 3-6 in Charlotte, NC.

SU earned the chance to send interns to each of the conventions through a partnership with the Washington Center for Internships and Academic Seminars. The University's Institute for Public Affairs and Civic Engagement (PACE), Office of the Provost and Fulton School of Liberal Arts held an essay contest to select the winners.

"The students have the opportunity to examine the role of national political conventions in the process of nominating and electing a party's candidates for president and vice president of the United States," said Dr. Adam Hoffman, PACE director. "While the decision was particularly difficult and the competition especially fierce, we are confident that these two are well equipped to represent us at the national level."

Cahill, a 2008 graduate of Mount de Sales Academy in Catonsville, MD, took a year off from her studies at SU last year to intern with the Republican National Committee, then for U.S. Representative Michele Bachmann (MN). She became interested in politics after participating in high school as a member of the Maryland General Assembly's student page program.

"I've had experience at the national level and the local level, but I have never been involved at this level in a national election," she said. "I think this will be historic."

Cahill is a member of SU's College Republicans club and Public Relations Student Society of America chapter.

Brown, who earned her B.A. in political science and English from the University of Idaho, is studying broadcast journalism and SU.

"I'm very interested in political reporting," she said, adding that she was excited to "see the whole national election process from the inside." She also would like to meet President Barack Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton during her internship.

A member of PACE's Presidential Citizen Scholars Program, as well as the SU TV club and the Wicomico County Democratic Club, Brown hopes to re-establish a College Democrats club for Salisbury students. She also recently began a job with the U.S. Protective Services Division at NASA's Wallops Flight Facility in Wallops Island, VA.

While neither she nor Cahill know yet exactly what all of their duties will encompass, both are excited to contribute.

"Putting on a huge program like this takes thousands of volunteers," said Cahill, who recently learned part of her service would be with CNN's public relations division. "Knowing that I helped is going to be the memory of a lifetime."

For more information call 410-543-6030 or visit the SU Web site at www.salisbury.edu.