



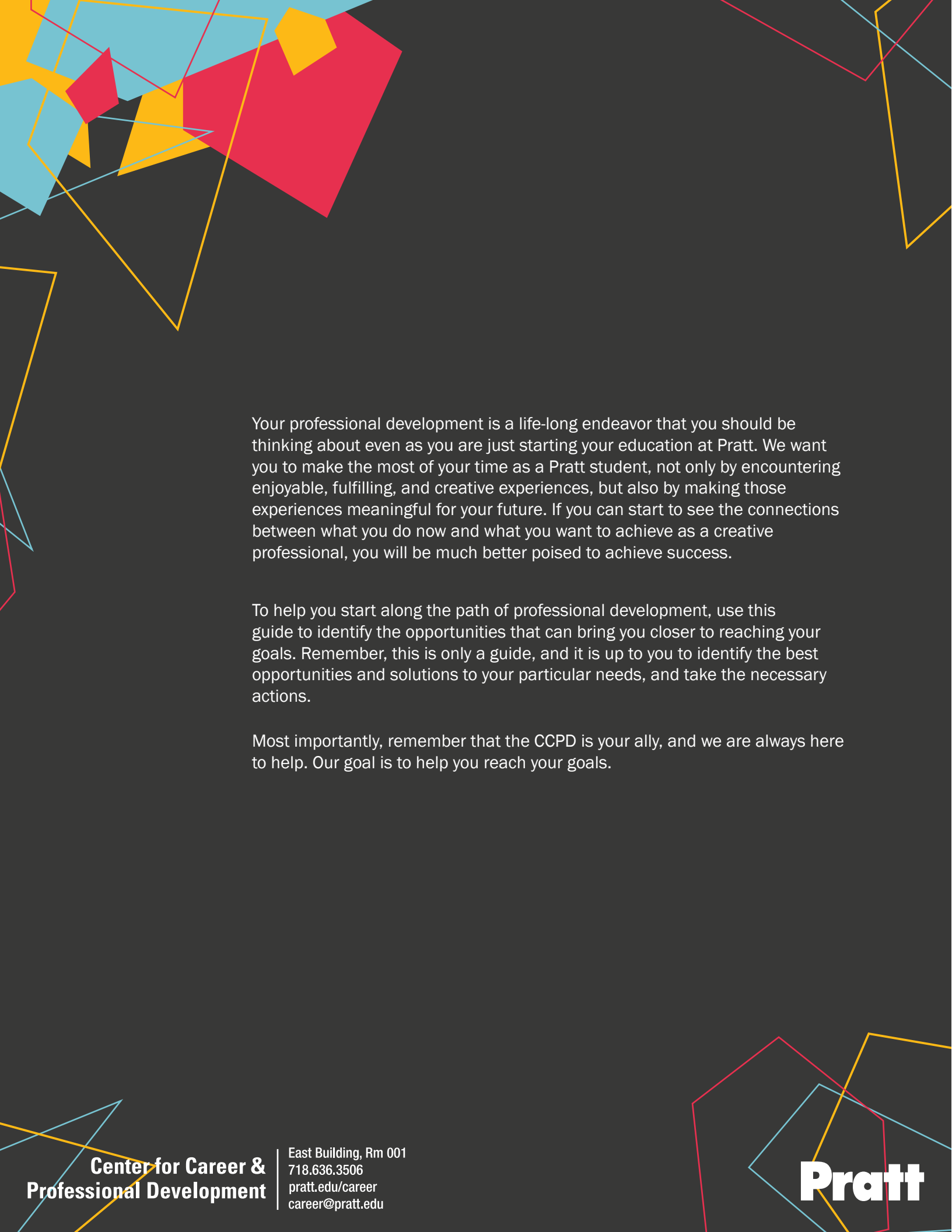
REALITY CHECK

take action towards success

**Center for Career &
Professional Development**

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Pratt



Your professional development is a life-long endeavor that you should be thinking about even as you are just starting your education at Pratt. We want you to make the most of your time as a Pratt student, not only by encountering enjoyable, fulfilling, and creative experiences, but also by making those experiences meaningful for your future. If you can start to see the connections between what you do now and what you want to achieve as a creative professional, you will be much better poised to achieve success.

To help you start along the path of professional development, use this guide to identify the opportunities that can bring you closer to reaching your goals. Remember, this is only a guide, and it is up to you to identify the best opportunities and solutions to your particular needs, and take the necessary actions.

Most importantly, remember that the CCPD is your ally, and we are always here to help. Our goal is to help you reach your goals.

JUNIOR YEAR

REALITY CHECK

◆ THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- Do you have the skills and experience needed to start working in your field?
- Are you considering continuing to graduate school? Have you thought about the programs, schools and locations that appeal to you?
- What's missing from your portfolio, skills list, and/or resume? How can you fill the gaps?
- Are you up to date on trends in your field? Do you follow blogs, trade journals, news articles, or other media?
- Are you still in touch with previous faculty members or supervisors who might serve as a reference? Have you kept them updated on your activities, achievements and progress?

◆ ACTIONS TO TAKE:

- Create a LinkedIn profile that highlights the work you've been developing as a student.
- Get professional experience through internships and summer jobs. Consider two to three internships by the time you graduate so you have experience in your field and learn more about the world of work.
- Begin a self-assessment. Meet a career counselor who can help you frame your goals, identify your interests, and strategize your career path.
- Develop a web presence by creating a website and join portfolios.pratt.edu.
- Create a blog that reflects your professional interests.
- Join professional organizations. Most professional organizations offer discounted student membership rates and offer events, information and opportunities to gain experience.

◆ SKILLS TO GAIN:

- Focus.** Think about how your projects begin to tell your story and be intentional in the way you complete class projects and assignments.
- Writing a cover letter.** Learn how to write a letter that markets your skills and meets potential employers' requirements.
- Work/Life balance.** Be sure you are taking care of your needs by getting plenty of rest, eating well, and exercising.
- Elevator Pitch.** Think about how to make the best first impression and marketing yourself at a moment's notice.
- Documentation.** Make sure you keep excellent documentation of all your work.

SKILL CHECKLIST

- Communication.** Learn to build dialogues, ask questions and how to present your ideas.
- Courage.** Think about risks you'll need to take and prepare yourself to be bold.
- Cultivate mentors.** Conduct information interviews with professionals in your field and keep in touch with faculty even if you aren't taking their courses anymore.
- Elevator pitch.** Think about how to make the best first impression and marketing yourself at a moment's notice.
- Focus.** Think about how your projects begin to tell your story and be intentional in the way you complete class projects and assignments.
- Interviewing.** Learn how to land the job by being confident and knowledgeable in front of an interviewer.
- Job searching.** Learn how to be thorough when researching opportunities.
- Manage your connections.** Keep track of who you meet. This will be the beginning of your network.
- Negotiating.** Start researching salaries and thinking about your financial responsibilities. It's good to know what you need, what's likely to be offered, and how to earn extra to make ends meet.
- Peer networking.** Learn who is in leadership positions on campus, talk to your fellow classmates, and start building strong connections with your peers.
- Presentation.** Seek out opportunities to present your work or research. Use each opportunity as a way of getting feedback from your audience.
- Prioritize.** Organize yourself by keeping a calendar of classes, meetings, events, and other obligations. Make sure you take time for yourself, too!
- Research.** Look into your potential career options and the fields that interest you.
- Resume writing.** Keep a list of all your skills, experience, education, leadership positions, volunteer positions, research, and projects.
- Self-Discovery.** Explore who you are to gain insight on what creative and professional pursuits you want to discover.
- Social media.** Think about how your social media demonstrates your interests, talents, and point of view.
- Work/Life balance.** Be sure you are taking care of your needs by getting plenty of rest, eating well, and exercising.
- Writing a cover letter.** Learn how to write a letter that markets your skills and meets potential employers' requirements.
- Documentation.** Make sure you keep excellent documentation of all your work.
- Networking.** It's all about who you know. If you don't feel you have a strong network, join professional organizations, do information interviews, and spend time getting to know your faculty members and/or supervisors.



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