

Medora, ND with Teddy Roosevelt, Courtesy of Joe Wiegand

To describe the inner workings of the hidden cattle town where I spent my summer is like trying to describe Sewanee traditions to someone who has never stepped foot onto the domain. Medora, North Dakota is the number one tourist attraction in the state and possibly in the upper Midwest. The restored cowboy haven brings in thousands of people each day who come to admire the Theodore Roosevelt National Park, the award winning Bully Pulpit Golf Course, and most importantly (in my opinion) the *Medora Musical*. The musical is live every single night from June 6- September 6 and the people flock to the family friendly variety show that never fails them each and every year. This production, and most of the events all over the town, are run by the Theodore Roosevelt Medora Foundation. This is where I come in.

The internship that I acquired through the Career Services Office was one with the incredibly talented Joe Wiegand. He immediately helped to transform the internship into something that would help me towards my future career goals. We decided on a film and social media focus for the summer. One where I would work with the Medora marketing team and Joe's vision to produce more business for Medora while also increasing the popularity of Teddy in the Facebook and YouTube worlds. The best bet for the summer was, since Joe would be out in Medora, that I get myself a job with the foundation. This would provide housing and meal plans and a very helpful wage for me to walk away from when the summer was over. TRMF hires about 300 people each summer to herd the thousands of tourist around the four block town all day until the musical commences at night. This gave me the opportunity to manage the small

theatre in town, the Old Town Hall Theater, where Teddy would delight the people in need of some good air conditioning with the romantic stories of his time in the North Dakota Badlands. Managing that theater included running ticketing and the newly installed gift shop, then closing that up in order to run up and do lights and sound for the show. I also was a museum curator for the Von Hoffman House, which was one of the original buildings built in 1884. My newfound knowledge of western settlement allowed for me to give the historic walking tours of the town, *Footsteps into Medora's Past*. Those were my day jobs, at night I booked it up to the musical to work the Welcome Center, which was ticket distribution and sales for the show. Also on days where people were short, I'd be called in at 8 in the morning to work day crew, which cleaned and got the amphitheater together for each night's shows. In my spare time I got the amazing opportunity to run around town with the true spirit of Teddy Roosevelt and film all the adventures we had.

This was the first job I have ever had, ever. On my premiere day out in the west, I was put on amphitheater crew because the season hadn't started yet, this included pretty much all the jobs no one else wants to do. We raked, shoveled, painted, and groomed. I knew from the beginning that I was about to build some serious character. Every job that I described in the previous paragraph gave me new skills and helped me grow as a more confident and independent person. The mundane work of retail and sitting in a museum for hours, or even learning to be on the clock helped me grow in ways I can't even explain. And that was just from my jobs with the foundation. Joe Wiegand taught me how to have fun at work and how every person should wake

up each day ready to make someone else's. Yes I learned about filming and how to schedule my time better, but the most important thing I learned is that it is possible to make a living doing something you love. You're going to have to work hard and it won't be easy, but the possibilities out there are astronomical. With that though, I have become a much more realistic person thanks to my time on the bottom of the totem pole, and I love it. My head is no longer in the clouds and I'm ready to "work hard at work worth doing", as Teddy would say. The work was hard and long and when I think of my day to day job I don't think I made that much of a difference in anyone's lives or even in that tiny town I called home for three months. But the people I met, I hope, will remain in my life forever, we made a difference for each other every day, helping to get through the heat and thankless shifts, the exhaustion and no days off. It's taught me that no one should go through life alone, and I'm so thankful Joe Wiegand had my back while I learned to make friends and work in a completely new environment. I was thrown into something completely unknown and not only did I survive, but I thrived. This is mind blowing in comparison to my first couple of weeks in the west, I never thought I would come to appreciate that cattle town as much as I do. Medora will always call me back and I'm confident I have a community to fall back on each summer and even after I graduate.

Joe and I have constructed a plan for the next steps of the internship. He will be sending out packets of his information to 50 casting agencies that I have chosen, this packet will also include my cover letter and resume. This will hopefully open up discussion with some local casting agencies for internship opportunities for me for the summer of 2015. This summer has

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given me the confidence to go out and get what I've always wanted and also the knowledge that

I am capable of learning quickly and being an asset to any working team.