

Summer Internship Report 2017

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Hometown: Washington, D.C.



**Friends Of Canon Gideon
Foundation (FOCAGIFO)
Uganda, Africa**

(Joey Adams is in front, third from the left)

Provide an overview of the organization/research project and a summary of your responsibilities, tasks, and/or projects.

The organization, FOCAGIFO, is celebrating their 25 years of existence. They are in the midst of planning the 25th Silver Jubilee Celebration on August 30, 2017 where all sponsors, donors, friends and family of Canon Gideon are invited. I attended weekly meetings to help fundraise for the event as well as plan the actual event. I assisted with coming up with a guest list, hand delivering invitations, attending lunches and other events for publicity for the event. A lot of my internship work was revolved around the planning of the celebration. Outside of planning for the event, I also taught the students at the institute dance classes, as well as taught a community health and leadership class.

During your internship, what did you accomplish or how did you make a difference? In what ways did you grow in your professional and technical skills?

I feel like my biggest accomplishments were with the students. I love to dance and being in Africa, I was hoping to better my skills and take cultural dance classes but instead of taking classes I started leading classes. It was a beautiful sight seeing how excited the students were for the weekly dance classes and seeing how much fun they had. The dance was completed my last week there and it will be performed during graduation, which I'm upset because I'll miss it. But I know the students will kill it out there. Also teaching classes, and helping the students with different personal skills made me feel better in the inside. I taught classes from body image, to public speaking, to learning how to advocate for yourself and many other topics. One of the most liked classes was leadership and being able to advocate for ourselves in a world that is usually likes to bring down black people. So many students came up to me and talked about how because of the classes and my own experiences they wanted better for themselves and wanted to be able to travel and experience other parts of the world, let

alone experience other parts of Africa. It is beautiful being able to allow people to want better for themselves.

Describe a problem that you helped to solve at your internship. What skills or knowledge from your education at Sewanee helped you address the problem?

There were no big problems that happened where I was able to help - not because I wasn't able to, but because it required professional help. One problem that I could think of was all the required brainstorming that was needed for the celebration that is coming up.

In what way were your teamwork skills strengthened?

Working with the other intern from Sewanee, it wasn't bad at all. There wasn't really a lot of demand for teamwork. One example I do remember is when we were leading a training workshop and I had to lead morning devotion. I was working with three other people and we came up with a game plan for the whole entire week so it wasn't as stressful. It was nice being able to communicate with one another and be of one accord.

How did your internship affect your career plans?

This internship affected my career goals as far as I know I want to work with a non profit organization. I also know I want to work with adolescents, and being able to teach the classes and working with the students made me realize that I want to make a difference not only nationally, but internationally. Believe it or not, adolescents that come from impoverished neighborhoods face some of the same challenges as other in their age group, whether that's in the household or in the schools or even personal battles.

In what ways did your internship cause you to encounter people of different backgrounds from your own? What steps did you take to communicate effectively with such persons? What did you learn from such persons' perspectives?

Being in Africa is already as different as it could be! But as far as different people backgrounds it wasn't that much different, not even the language. Many Africans did speak English and although we speak different types of English because they were colonized by the British, we were still able to get things accomplished.

Words of thanks to your internship funding donors:

I want to truly thank you for making it worthwhile. I never would have imagined being in another country, let alone being back in my motherland, Africa. It was a very humbling experience and I am beyond blessed to have been granted this opportunity. I hope that I can visit again in the future and continue making a difference there, but for now, I hope that other students are able to experience what I did.

Words of advice for future interns (housing, transportation, etc.)?

Please be open to the new experiences that you will face while in Africa. It's very different from where many of us come from, let alone to what we are accustomed to, but it is a beautiful opportunity and being there is truly a blessing. You have to make the most of it.