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

The Jericho Road Episcopal Housing Initiative of New Orleans is a neighborhood-based nonprofit homebuilder that provides families with healthy and energy-efficient affordable housing opportunities. Jericho Road partners with neighborhood residents, organizations and businesses to create and maintain a stable and thriving community. As this summer's Housing Sustainability Intern, I developed educational programming for first-time homebuyers, developed marketing materials for the housing sustainability program events, conducted interviews with elderly and disabled homeowners, and established relationships with different donors and sponsorship organizations.

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 accomplished creating and carrying out several educational workshops and other events for those interested in homeownership. More specifically, I planned events to host at community spaces, which has never occurred before in Jericho Road's history! Previous events have been held at Jericho Road's location, so this change was exciting for us. Based on how I went about advertising for/planning these events, I developed a "How to Plan an Event" document for future Jericho Road interns. This document intends to ensure that those coming into the position will have extensive and detailed guidance based on how I went about planning and hosting the events. Additionally, I wrote letters asking for sponsorship to various companies in the Greater New Orleans area. These letters brought in two donations for the organization, which was exciting for me because I had never written any letters like these before! In that way, I developed a skill to write similar letters in future lines of work. I developed more skills to better plan events, and I learned a lot about housing and finance, which is something I had no knowledge about prior to this internship.
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?

My involvement with the Community Engagement House (CoHo) helped me so much in my internship. At Sewanee, the CoHo put on community events a couple times per month. This required a lot of detailed event planning, such as developing posters and other advertisements for the events, contacting the speaker if there was one, planning and reserving the location, and ensuring that each event contributed to the CoHo's mission. I used the CoHo's model of "How to Plan an Event," when I went about planning events, and I also created such a model for Jericho Road. Similar to my CoHo work, I planned and executed several events for Jericho Road's Housing Sustainability Programming. This includes our Post-Purchase workshops, monthly Homebuyer's Club workshops, and our "Lunch & Learn" information session. In the past, Jericho Road has had an issue with interns not initiating event planning/new projects and ideas. I helped out on that front with my enthusiasm and willingness to plan events months in advance so that incoming employees will not have to spend as much time on the details of the events. Additionally, my anthropology studies assisted in a new project Jericho Road took on: interviewing elderly and disabled home owners. My interviews with them turned into written works about their personal stories that were made public so that these homeowners can be humanized and people looking to donate to Jericho Road can see the real stories of the real individuals that their donations will assist.

In what way were your teamwork skills strengthened?

So, I am a perfectionist. Therefore, it is doubly difficult for me to accept help and other people's criticism. During the first couple of weeks, I realized that one of my coworkers was also a perfectionist who intensely criticizes other people's work. When I would design posters, he would point out things to change about 5-6 times, and this really bothered me. I did not want to spend all of my time on flier-making just to have it criticized over and over by someone who could easily just design it themselves. I had to learn how to take this criticism not as harshly or let it affect me as much. I also communicated to my supervisor how much the situation bothered me, telling her that I wasn't going to spend all of my time making fliers just to have to redo them multiple times. Through this, I learned how to be honest with what wasn't working for me, because normally I would just take on anything and push through. So, I learned how to communicate with those around me what was working and what was not, which strengthens how I work with those around me.

How did your internship affect your career plans?

Honestly, this impacted how I understand non-profit organizations, which was an area I saw myself working in in my future. After this experience, I do not know if I would work with a non-profit as my career. A lot of what I was doing was desk job work and I now know that I need to be outside in my future. After working with Jericho Road, I am realizing that I want to continue involvement with non-profits, but I do not necessarily want to be employed by one unless I direct it. This summer's experience also reinforced how I need to be working with people and out in the community. I really enjoyed the outreach work that I did, so if I end up being a professor in the future, for example, I would love to get out to do outreach in the community with students in addition to teaching.

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?

Jericho Road develops its housing in the Central City neighborhood. This is a historically black neighborhood, and all of our houses are sold to individuals and working families who are making
LMI. As a white woman from an upper-middle class household, I interacted heavily with people of different racial/ethnic/socioeconomic classes. In order to effectively communicate with others, you must make an effort to understand them. This requires turning a listening ear to their stories, which is a step I took when encountering people of different backgrounds. I tried my best to be humble about my previous involvements with social justice issues, thereby communicating to others that I do not know everything and am not here to "solve" anyone's problems. I also attended a conference run by white men. This was difficult for my co-workers and I to understand how they were for the individuals we were working with in Central City, but we communicated our mission to them, which ended up reaching some of their interests in non-profit/volunteer work. At this time, I knew I needed to use my privilege as a white woman to better bridge a gap between different racial and socioeconomic classes. I learned the possibilities of coming together despite backgrounds. With such intense engagement with people of all backgrounds, I understand that it IS possible to bring differences together through effective communication and the willingness to listen and be humble.

**Words of thanks to your internship funding donors:**

Thank you so much for providing me with this experience with Jericho Road. My summer in New Orleans was a dream; this city is overflowing with life and I immediately felt comfortable at my job and in this city. New Orleans felt like home after just a few days, and I have never felt this way before about a place. At my internship, I learned a lot about housing, finance, and marketing, which developed a lot of skills I did not previously have. I met some of the greatest people I have ever known in my life, and this place has given me hope for people's futures. Jericho Road gave me the opportunity to explore my passions for community engagement work, simultaneously enhancing my understanding of diverse populations. I am so grateful that this opportunity was made possible by you, and I hope that future students will have the same chance as me!

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

I lived with a host family, which was an overwhelmingly positive experience! It was great to save money and live with people who provided me with so much.