

Summer Internship Report 2017

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Hometown: Nashville, Tennessee



Consulate General of France- Atlanta Atlanta, GA

(Kelly is second from the right)

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

The Consulate General of France in Atlanta is one of 10 national French consulates, with the embassy being located in Washington D.C. The consulate is comprised of different departments, such as Business, Scientific, Cultural, etc. I was apart of the Press Services/Communications department. I served as a Press intern, which meant that I worked with two other people, completing tasks like: writing/translating articles about upcoming cultural/political events, researching political tendencies of particular districts, creating promotional materials with Photoshop, managing social media accounts/creating posts, publishing articles, organizing/gathering various data, and staying up to date on current events, among other things.

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?

During my internship, I greatly improved my French communication skills, through French-only office communication, writing texts/articles in French and receiving feedback from my boss, as well as answering the phone to French speakers. I was able to have multiple articles published on the Consulate's website and I increased my knowledge about the current political climate in the Southeast.

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?

All the French classes that I've taken at Sewanee helped me succeed in this internship, as well as critical thinking skills when writing an article or promoting an event, there is always a target audience that may not be easy to recognize. Critical thinking skills honed at Sewanee allowed me to manage and boost the popularity of the Consulate's social media presence by making events sound appealing and attractive to the target audience.

In what way were your teamwork skills strengthened?

I learned many things from my coworkers when I had difficulties completing a task. My office mate would almost always be able to help me. He was a good example of being open to your teammates and always being willing to help one another, as well as recognizing that we all have different strengths. In turn, I tried to emulate that willingness to help others. For example, my coworker showed me how to put up a pop-up banner, and I showed him how to use Photoshop.

How did your internship affect your career plans?

I have never known exactly what I want to do in my career, except that I want it to involve French. My boss gave me some great advice : "Use French as a tool while you pursue your interests, instead of solely focusing on the language." This advice made me "zoom out" and reconsider what my interests really are besides French, and how it could be used as a tool.

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?

Everyone I worked with came from a different background than myself, given that I mostly worked with Europeans. I had to get over any nervousness and jump in with my French, which proved to work out quite well. I learned that everyone's path is different and unpredictable, that everyone has valuable experiences, and that if you work hard enough, you can perfect skills like a foreign language.

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

When in Atlanta, take advantage of public transportation! Also, adapt and be flexible. That is one of the top traits my boss said she looks for in an employee.

Words of thanks to your internship funding donors:

Thank you so much for the ability to have this experience. It was the perfect internship for me this summer, and I am very grateful for the experience, because I truly wouldn't have been able to do it without the financial support. My professional future has been shaped by this experience.