

Summer Internship Report 2017

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Hometown: Chattanooga, Tennessee



**Thrive Regional Partnership
Chattanooga, Tennessee**

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

Thrive Regional Partnership is a certified 501(C)(3) non-profit organization headquartered in Chattanooga, TN committed to the sustainable development of the tri-state (Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia), 16-county region around Chattanooga. Thrive Regional Partnership is result of the Thrive 2055 Planning Initiative and 3-year visioning process, partially “midwifed” by the Chattanooga Chamber of Commerce (the 2017 Chamber of the Year). Informed by the survey results of this planning initiative, Thrive Regional Partnership works to champion our region’s priorities: education & workforce, natural treasures, regional economic development, and regional transportation. They outline their purpose as "to develop, implement and sustain a vision for responsible and inspired growth for the next four decades. Through communication, collaboration, analytics and innovation, we seek to optimize community development opportunities while protecting the natural treasures and landscapes that define this special place." In this way, Thrive Regional Partnership is “reaching beyond today to inspire a thriving tomorrow”.

While my tasks varied throughout the summer and I helped wherever was needed by Bridgett (Thrive CEO) or Ruthie (Thrive Outreach Coordinator), my primary responsibility was to help procure photographs for Thrive’s recent “A Watershed Moment” campaign. Having just recently launched their “A Watershed Moment” Map & Vision - which was just displayed at the International ESRI User conference - at the Tennessee Aquarium’s Conservation Institute, in conjunction with the UTC IGT Lab, my primary responsibility was sourcing photos for the campaign’s digital story-map. I also was tasked with helping developing the #ThriveBucketList challenge and social media campaign.

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 sourced the photos for the "A Watershed Moment" digital story-map and helped develop the #ThriveBucketList challenge. I think the primary way I grew in my professional and technical skills was simply by further witnessing the power of communication and getting to improve my own communication skills by helping with outreach tasks and events. More specifically, I got to attend a "Communicative, Collaborative, Conservation Planning" GIS workshop, and had the chance to pick up some GIS instruction.

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?

As the intern for Thrive, which is currently, full-time, only a two-person operations and is involved all over the region and with many different projects, I think I was able to help out with such diverse projects because of the flexibility I have been afforded in my liberal arts education.

In what way were your teamwork skills strengthened?

My teamwork skills were constantly practiced as the entire Thrive organization, at the time, consisted of Bridgett, Ruthie, volunteer Carolyn, and myself. We had to be in constant communication and work collaboratively to fulfill all of Thrive's projects around the region.

How did your internship affect your career plans?

It confirmed and strengthened my passion for conservation and belief in the importance of such grassroots groups and efforts.

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?

During my internship, I encountered people from all sorts of different professional backgrounds and I was able to gain experience from many of them. By being straightforward about my experience in that field - or lack thereof - I was really able to learn from those I had the opportunity to work with.

Words of thanks to your internship funding donors:

Bridgett & Ruthie - thank you for such a phenomenal summer. I can't thank you enough for involving me so deeply within the organization and trusting me with all the tasks you did - I cannot think of a better way to learn as much as I did from you two.