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NewSouth Books Internship Experience

This summer I gained experience as an editorial and marketing intern at NewSouth Books. NewSouth is a general trade publisher specializing in Southern literature, particularly non-fiction and history. NewSouth is a small independent publishing house, and has a bookstore as well. They publish about 20 books a year.

My duties were equally divided between editorial and marketing tasks for the company. My editorial duties consisted of proofreading and editing manuscripts before publication, drafting press releases, evaluating book submissions, and researching topics for books that have not yet been published. The marketing side of my internship involved sending out press releases, drafting marketing plans for upcoming books, contacting authors and libraries, and researching contact information and book awards to update databases.

Through the various tasks I was given throughout the internship, I gained knowledge about different aspects of publishing. For the editing side, I learned about what actually goes into publishing a manuscript. During one particular project, I was able to update an edition of Helen Blackshear's poetry anthology

Alabama Album. I worked with an application called InDesign, which converts uploaded or scanned manuscripts into book blocks, which are eventually converted into published books. The original edition of the book was published in 1996, and needed to be reissued. Through my engagement with the project, I edited grammatical mistakes within the poems, fixed formatting issues, and proofread the entire book. For Helen Blackshear's historical book *Vanished in the Unknown Shade*, I researched photo sources, edited and researched sources of poems, corrected grammar mistakes, and fixed formatting issues with the cover and the book block. For the marketing part of the internship, I was given tasks that dealt with interested parties. For one project, I contacted authors to request for *Forsaken*, a work of historical fiction. Some of the authors replied to me directly, and provided blurbs for the book. In addition, I compiled an extensive marketing plan for *Forsaken*, and I also contacted the author to provide information on the authors who provided blurbs.

I learned a great deal from working at NewSouth. The book publishing business is a multifaceted endeavor which involves various factors such as marketing, editing, and the book acquisitions process. My favorite part of the job was definitely editing unpublished manuscripts. I enjoyed this because I got texts from numerous authors, and I gradually understood discrepancies between

excellent and poor writing. My least favorite aspect of the job was probably entering information in databases, but I am aware that every job has its tedious moments. The greatest lesson I learned from my internship was how important it is to prioritize work tasks. Because I had editorial and marketing tasks, I had to learn how to space out the work that was given to me, and how to decide which tasks to devote more time to. The greatest thing I learned about myself is how much I enjoy editing. In regards to my career goals, I would like to pursue employment in the editing field. My current aspiration is to look for a job in either book publishing, magazine editing, or a newspaper.