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

The Hunter Museum of American Art is an art museum located in the Art District of Chattanooga, Tennessee, sitting on a cliff overlooking the river which flows through the center of the city. Their mission is to engage audiences and use its collection to engage its diverse audiences through its exhibits, relating specifically through the tradition of American art. I had several responsibilities that related to this. My primary, though far from only, responsibility was to catalog the personal photos and documents of Harold Cash, a famous Chattanooga local whose estate had come into the museum through his widow. This included scanning documents, photos, and newspapers, as well as creating a log of each object and packing them into acid-free boxes for future use. While there, I also was tasked with assisting the packing and shipping of an exhibit out, as well as the unpacking, conservation, and setup of a new exhibit. I also assisted in organizing the art vault for future use.

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 this internship I accomplished several tasks and jobs which have greatly expanded my understanding of how museums work behind the scenes. My primary job was to, as mentioned, record and preserve the Harold Cash estate. I came back to this extensive project whenever I had a free moment. This involved cataloging, recording, organizing, and handling documents from (in some cases) one hundred years or so ago. Likewise, I was heavily involved in removing a temporary exhibit and replacing it with another exhibit; this involved packing, recording, handling, and shipping art ranging from granite sculptures to watercolors on paper to cardboard puppets, each of which had their own requirements to ensure the safety of the art. I was also involved in the curation and preservation of several art pieces which had arrived at the museum with an unfortunate insect infestation. We cleaned these safely and they were ready for display on time. Lastly I also was involved
in moving and organizing the art vault of the museum, which included handling paintings and
drawings which were extremely valuable and fragile, while also recording their new positions.

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?
The biggest help that my Sewanee education supplied was in contextualizing the art that I was
working with. Because of my history and art education, I was able to understand the role that each
painting played in the museum and the sorts of messages and stories that it could tell. Though my
history education taught me to value paintings, having studied art myself I was never afraid of them
the way that some people might be; that is to say, while I was very careful not to damage any of the
art, I also was not paralyzed by the fear of damaging it. This was vital in every aspect of my museum
experience, from documenting primary sources to organizing the vault to switching out new exhibits
for the old.

In what way were your teamwork skills strengthened?
My teamwork skills were improved most by the opportunity to help change out the special exhibit on
display. This required an enormous team effort, bringing together all branches of the museum to
quickly, efficiently, and safely remove the previous exhibit and replace it with the current Wayne
White exhibit. Curators, registrars, outreach, security, and conservators all had to pitch in to ensure
the safety of the art as well as publicize it and create an environment in which to display it. My role
was to assist in the packing and unpacking, as well as the set-up for the exhibit, but this inherently
forced me to work as a team with all the others involved.

How did your internship affect your career plans?
The internship at the Hunter confirmed, in many ways, that pursuing a career in museums would be
beneficial to me. Though challenging, museum work will provide the sorts of challenges which I
thrive on, and I plan on pursuing further career and education goals with museum work in mind.

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?
One of the major goals of the museum is to have a commitment to inclusion, diversity, and openness.
With this in mind, it was very key that all viewpoints be respected. During one particular session, I
and several interns from the outreach and education departments were brought to perform a training
exercise with the goal of creating a hypothetical movie that drew from our own experiences. I learned
a lot about the other interns, including their lives and backgrounds. Together our diverse experiences
helped us to create an interesting story that none of us could have come up with on our own.

Words of advice for future interns (housing, transportation, etc.)?
The Hunter Museum is located downtown, only a few blocks from the University of Tennessee at
Chattanooga. Every summer UTC offers a program through which interns from other universities can
stay at UTC for a fairly cheap rate. Then you can just take a short walk or bike ride to the Museum in
the morning! It was very convenient for me.

Words of thanks to your internship funding donors:
I cannot thank you enough for this opportunity. My experiences at the Hunter Museum have been
incredibly useful for my future career. Not only did I learn about the inner workings of museums, but
I also had the opportunity to meet and work with people of all backgrounds- artists, historians,
conservators, security workers, and more- who introduced me to all new ways of thinking about
history, art, preservation, and the role of museums in society. This was an incredible experience.
Again, thank you for your support.