

Summer Internship Report 2017

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Hometown: Dallas, Texas



**Yale School of Forestry &
Environmental Studies
Eastford, Connecticut**

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

The Yale-Myers forest is an 8,000-acre piece of land owned by the Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies for research, teaching, recreation, etc. near the town of Eastford, CT. As a research assistant, I was tasked with helping current, master's, and doctoral students construct experiments, conduct research, and record results of many different topics in environmental studies and forestry throughout the camp.

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 was able to put the field and research skills I learned through the forestry department at Sewanee to the test at the Yale-Myers forest day to day. For example, some projects involved venturing solo into the woods to measure and record tree heights and diameters while other interns and Yale students conducted other aspects of the research project. Not only was I able to complete this task with relative ease and little explanation, I was able to put my tree ID skills learned in Snowden to use and was ahead in many aspects as compared to my fellow peers forestry skills & knowledge.

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?

See the response to the next question. Communicational skills learned inside and outside of the classroom discussion have been the most useful skill I've acquired from Sewanee and were crucial to my internship experience this summer.

In what way were your teamwork skills strengthened?

Many times throughout the summer, the interns and I were tasked with projects to complete on our own with little to no direction given from our superiors. Therefore, it was up to us to develop the methods and procedures by which we would follow to complete the task at hand. The most important component in our teamwork was communication. Everyone would present different ideas and solutions and hear everyone else's through and through. We would then decide which ones would be most ideal, how we could tweak them, combine them, etc. to find the most efficient and productive solution. Sure, I've been apart of team efforts and have used teamwork my entire life, but until this summer I had yet to see such a non-turbulent and cohesive effort by such a diverse group of people.

How did your internship affect your career plans?

The internship gave me much more insight to the life of a master's and doctoral student in the environmental studies/forestry field during the summertime where a large portion of research for their theses or dissertations were conducted. I was able to picture myself in the shoes of the current graduate-level students and the internship strongly convinced me that postgraduate education is something that needs to be in my future.

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 from the interns to the instructors all came from different backgrounds especially when compared to mine, specifically being from Texas, and let alone going to a small liberal arts college in rural Tennessee! However, being as it was the Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies, we all had a shared interest in the outdoors and the natural world. It was through our educational pursuits in this field that most of our bonding came about. However, Sewanee itself is a diverse campus with many people from different places and backgrounds, so meeting and communicating with new people and learning from them was second nature to me.

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

Despite the long drive from Texas, I was very grateful having a vehicle at the isolated camp in rural Connecticut as I was able to travel to the nearest town of Storrs for food, pharmacy, etc. during the week and longer distances to visit my friends on the weekend around the Northeast. It will make the eight weeks a much better experience, I promise.

Words of thanks to your internship funding donors:

Thank you so much for the opportunity to pursue an internship at one of the oldest forestry schools in the country. I was able to pursue an internship in a part of the country I had never been to before and was exposed to experiences I never thought would be possible. Thank you.