

Summer Internship Report 2017

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Hometown: Knoxville, Tennessee



**Hunter Museum of American Art
Chattanooga, Tennessee**

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 a small museum but also the cultural center of Chattanooga. As a communications and marketing intern, I reported directly to the Director of Communications and I had a variety of tasks and responsibilities. My regular daily tasks included drafting social media and website posts, writing press releases and articles about upcoming exhibitions and events, setting up for events and taking photos/videos for later publicity posts. My main project throughout my internship was rewriting the language for the Hunter's new website, which was an extensive and collaborative responsibility.

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 accomplished writing three 600-word articles that were ultimately published in a Chattanooga events magazine about upcoming exhibitions at the Hunter, and by the end of my internship, I had edited and rewritten the copy of every webpage for the Hunter's new website. I made a difference in being able to devote my time to a lengthy, time-intensive project and create real results by the end of my 8 weeks. I gained knowledge of the conceptual side of web design, ensuring that information was intuitive and easy to find for visitors to the museum's website. My involvement in this project allowed me to go with the Director of Communications to meetings with the web designers, in which I was able to offer useful suggestions and ideas based on the research and work on the website I had done, and in which I was also able to observe and learn a great deal about the process of creating a website for an organization. I gained professional skills in communication, organization, and collaboration, as I worked with each department to ensure that the webpages for their department had their input and suggestions. I also gained writing skills in taking language for events and programs and creating media posts and press releases that were in-keeping with the Hunter's tone and brand. I also gained experience in using Squarespace to edit the Hunter website.

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 main problems I helped solve throughout my internship were related to how to improve the website so that it is intuitive for the visitor. I used my writing skills gained from all of my Sewanee coursework to create language for the website that was both informative, succinct, and interesting. In working to solve the problem of a lack of engagement on our social media accounts, my research skills that I have also honed throughout my time at Sewanee helped me immensely. I researched the best practices for nonprofits on social media and compiled notes from a variety of sources so I could have as much knowledge as possible when I pitched solutions at a social media meeting.

In what way were your teamwork skills strengthened?

Every aspect of the Hunter's day-to-day work is team-oriented, and each department works incredibly closely. I learned to work with different personalities and how to get the most out of each time I collaborated with someone. In the rewriting of website copy, I learned that collaboration is most effective when you are organized, so that you know who has given feedback on what and when. I particularly strengthened my teamwork skills when I needed edits from the education department for the webpages on the museum's various programs for students. With summer camps underway, the education department was incredibly busy, but I also had a deadline looming to turn in the final language. I worked with each individual to find the most convenient way for them to edit the pages. I also contributed ideas in multiple meetings, and I improved my ability to speak up and contribute to a collaborative conversation with confidence and clarity.

How did your internship affect your career plans?

I really enjoyed my internship, and it has solidified both my desire to pursue marketing and/or communications as well as my desire to work for a museum. I enjoyed not only the work, but also the environment and culture, which is incredibly valuable knowledge as I continue towards my career goals. I am grateful to have gained mentors through my internship that I plan to keep in contact with as I pursue my career goals.

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?

The Hunter museum brings together people of vastly different age groups, ethnicities, and perspectives. However, I learned through listening to other people's perspectives that the arts community can often seem exclusive and that the Hunter has devoted immense amounts of time and resources to changing that. Through conversations with the many dedicated staff of the Hunter from various backgrounds, I learned the staff of a museum has the vital responsibility of ensuring that the museum is inclusive and brings positive change in the community, rather than seeming as only a space for certain backgrounds. Had I not taken the time to ask thoughtful questions and listen intently to people with a variety of perspectives, I would never have known about this problem that many museums face and the steps the Hunter was taking to overcome it.

Words of thanks to your internship funding donors:

I am so grateful that this opportunity was made possible through Sewanee's nternship funding program, as this experience would not have been possible without it. This was an incredibly beneficial experience; I learned more than I thought possible in 8 weeks, and I made connections that will be

incredibly valuable as I graduate Sewanee in the near future and take on the real world. Thank you so much!