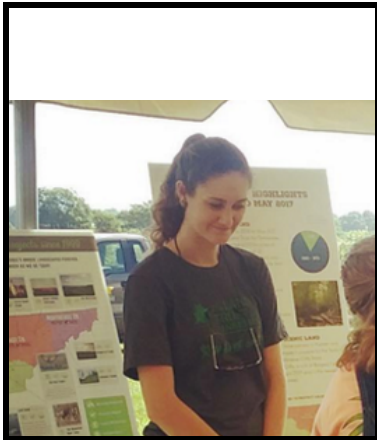


Summer Internship Report 2017

M.C. Murphy, C'17

Hometown: Alexandria, Virginia



**The Land Trust for Tennessee
Nashville, Tennessee**

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

The Land Trust for Tennessee (LTTN) is a statewide non-profit organization with a mission to preserve the unique character of Tennessee's natural and historic landscapes and sites for future generations. As an intern with LTTN, my duties included assisting the Land Protection team with compiling and digitizing conservation easement projects. I completed a research project on the informational materials that land trust organizations distribute to landowners, culminating in a presentation of my findings to assist LTTN in updating and enhancing their initial landowner information materials. I additionally compiled an email invite list of appraisers, attorneys, and law firms for a property appraisal seminar LTTN is hosting this month. During my internship, I gained firsthand experience using ArcGIS software and assisted with mapping projects, which included creating property aerials and recording watershed data.

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 helped revise LTTN's Landowner Information Packet and introduced new informational materials for landowners interested in pursuing a conservation easement. To accomplish this, I contacted dozens of land trust organizations across the United States and inquired about the informational materials they distribute to landowners. By analyzing these documents, I was able to assess LTTN's current documents and create a preliminary FAQ page to familiarize landowners with land trust terms and concepts. At the conclusion of this project, I wrote a memo that was sent to the entire LTTN staff informing them of these updates. This project greatly honed my communications skills as I drafted emails to land trust organizations and communicated my

research to the LTTN team. I additionally expanded my knowledge of how land trust organizations function and the conservation easement process. The FAQ page and recommendations that resulted from this project will continue to be assessed by the Land Protection Team and will likely lead to new published materials.

I additionally gained valuable working experience with ArcGIS mapping software and Salesforce, a customer relationship management platform. I had the opportunity to complete online courses on nonprofit management, ArcGIS, and land conservation practices that greatly enhanced my internship experience.

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?

My research experience at Sewanee greatly helped me with my research project on land trust communications materials. I utilized the resources available to me and strived to conduct a comprehensive analysis of landowner informational materials to best enhance LTTN's Landowner Information Packet.

In what way were your teamwork skills strengthened?

My experience taught me to ask others for help when needed and to draw upon the strengths and talents of others. As an intern, I offered my assistance to all staff members and was able to assist with projects spanning the Land Protection and Development teams. My teamwork skills were strengthened as I learned firsthand about the multiple moving parts necessary for a non-profit organization to function.

How did your internship affect your career plans?

My internship with The Land Trust for Tennessee was a wonderful and valuable experience that granted me knowledge about land protection in Tennessee and how land trust organizations operate across the United States. During my internship, I learned about determining property conservation values and would like to gain more field experience in evaluating habitats in greatest need of conservation. Following this experience in land conservation, I strive to work as an ecologist or wildlife biologist for a conservation organization.

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 LTTN staff has a diversity of talents in fields that span environmental policy, law, marketing, communications, and geospatial analysis. Thus, I was able to consult people with many different expertise and perspectives when completing projects. I also had the opportunity to attend community outreach events and speak with landowners where I communicated the mission and work of LTTN in addition to providing a general summary of the conservation easement process. I learned a great deal about the current state of agriculture in the US and the difficulties farmers face to maintain their land in the wake of increasing development pressures.

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

I would not recommend Vanderbilt's Summer Intern Housing - although the location on West End Avenue is very central and convenient, the housing is expensive and parking was very frustrating and not accommodating.

Words of thanks to your internship funding donors:

Thank you SO much to those who funded my public policy internship with The Land Trust for Tennessee! Your funding allowed me to gain firsthand experience in the conservation field with one of the most reputable and celebrated land trusts in the country. I am forever grateful for my time in Nashville with The Land Trust for Tennessee.