

Summer Internship Report 2017

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Seattle Science Foundation Seattle, Washington

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

Aside from basic tasks around the office, I conducted a research project in which I analyzed the best business practices for medical research facilities that use human tissue. Specifically I compared two common practices: using a willed body program and using a third party vendor for tissue, and made a recommendation on which practice is more fiscally prudent. I presented my findings to my supervisors. Another responsibility I had was keeping the research boards updated. The board was a list of all of the research fellows that worked there, with all their projects listed, and my job was to keep that list up to date as projects were completed. In addition to my responsibilities, I shadowed employees at the foundation, and administrators from the nearby hospital, in order to learn what a business career in healthcare would entail.

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?

The previously mentioned research I conducted will be published in an academic journal, most likely the Journal of Clinical Anatomy. That being said, however, the biggest accomplishment of my internship is that I gained new professional skills. As I have never worked in an office before, learning how to function in that environment will certainly serve me well down the road. Secondly, I learned how to write professional emails, which is more important than many realize as emails can easily be misinterpreted. By writing emails to my superiors I gained a sense of what is acceptable in a professional email. Even the most basic tasks that were assigned to me were helpful, because it taught me how to complete assigned tasks promptly in a professional setting.

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?

When I analyzed the business practices of medical research facilities in my research, I used the critical thinking skills I've gained at Sewanee to apply what I learned from my research into a recommendation that I ultimately presented.

In what way were your teamwork skills strengthened?

My teamwork skills were strengthened, not through any specific instance, but from my time there as a whole. As I was encountering a lot of firsts: first office job, first job in the healthcare industry, first time shadowing a professional, etc., I understood that I had a lot to learn. By accepting that there were others that I could learn from, I improved my listening skills, which can be invaluable with regards to teamwork.

How did your internship affect your career plans?

I was originally planning on going into grad school to get my Masters in Healthcare Administration (MHA) immediately after Sewanee, but now I am leaning towards an MBA and waiting until I've been working for a few years to get it. My reasoning behind this is that the MHA did not seem to be incredibly well respected among those I talked to, both people I worked with and those I shadowed. Additionally, I learned that work experience is often valued more than any degree. With that in mind, my plan/goal is to now work a few years, gain experience, and then perhaps get a second degree if any.

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?

I encountered many doctors, who had a great deal more education than I did. Additionally their areas of expertise were different than mine, as they are the medical side of healthcare, and I am trying to work in the business side of healthcare. I would communicate with them like anyone else I encountered this summer, by going into the conversation with the understanding that I am still an undergraduate, and should try and learn what I can from them. One interesting piece of knowledge I picked up from them was learning what they thought of the other aspects of the healthcare industry, from their perspectives as medical doctors.

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

- If you are in a big city, figure out the public transportation system as early as possible: don't waste money on gas, parking, and uber!!
- Try and live in an area where there are other people your age. I lived two blocks from the University of Washington and having other college students around was a blessing at times.
- Save money on food and learn to cook for yourself- you won't have a dining hall forever and eating take-out every night is not economical

Words of thanks to your internship funding donors:

Thank you!! My summer at the Seattle Science Foundation has put me in a position to break into the business side of the healthcare industry after graduation, because it will make me a stronger candidate for another internship at a healthcare company the following summer, provide me with new connections and references, and gave me a starting point for my career. I learned valuable skills that cannot be taught in a classroom, including how to act and conduct yourself in a professional setting,

that will serve me well down the road. I met great people, learned new things, and I am energized about a business career in healthcare. Thank you!