

This summer I split my time interning for two different organizations dealing with historic preservation in New Orleans: Felicity Street Redevelopment, Inc. and the Vieux Carré Commission Foundation. I was an intern for a Sewanee graduate, Rachel Robinson, who was the part-time director for both organizations. Working at each organization provided both an enriching and fulfilling experience. I learned valuable knowledge on the workings of non-profit organizations and the importance of preserving a city's history and heritage, especially in a historic city like New Orleans.

Felicity Street Redevelopment is a non-profit organization located in the lower St. Charles Corridor neighborhood. Its mission is to revitalize the neighborhood and community, especially after the devastation of Hurricane Katrina. Felicity operates on a revolving fund that purchases homes or properties located in the Lower St. Charles corridor neighborhood that are in need of restoration and/or stabilization. They then help to stabilize the foundation and to protect and preserve the historic integrity of the property. The properties are then sold to a diverse set of buyers that will help to create a vibrant and energetic community with both residential and commercial promise.

The two and a half months I spent at Felicity were an exciting time for the organization. Several projects the organization had invested a great deal of time and money into were nearing final sale agreements and the organization was in the process of moving to a new office location. It was a great experience to be able to be involved in the sale and completion of several projects and I also learned how much hard work and time goes into completed a project of that scale. Also, I was able to see the amount of

red tape involved in dealing with these types of properties and that a great deal of persistence and patient is needed in successfully dealing with it. Because the office was in the process of moving to a new location, I spent a lot of time helping to organize and pack up the office. In doing this I learned how crucial organization is in running and managing an efficient office. Near the end of my internship, my boss went full-time with the Vieux Carre Commission Foundation and Felicity asked me to stay on to help hold down the fort and manage the office until they found a replacement. This opportunity to be the interim office manager taught me a great deal as I learned how to manage the daily tasks and finances of an office and non-profit organization while also gaining hands-on experience in historic preservation.

The other organization I interned for was the Vieux Carre Commission Foundation (VCCF). The VCCF is a non-profit organization that seeks to help preserve and protect the French Quarter, the Vieux Carre, by supporting the Vieux Carre Commission. The Vieux Carre Commission is a legislative body that has regulates the private property in the French Quarter in order to protect, preserve, and maintain the architectural and historic integrity of one of the oldest historic districts in the United States and an integral part of New Orleans' culture, community, and economy. The VCCF helps to support and further the cause and goals of the VCC. One of their main projects was conducting a lighting study of the French Quarter. The foundation enlisted the help of a top lighting design consultant, Suzan Tillotson from New York, to study and propose new lighting regulations for the VCC to adopt for the French Quarter. In June, Suzan Tillitson came to New Orleans to meet with and discuss the findings of the study

with many important groups in the French Quarter and in the city government of New Orleans. The study was both fascinating and enlightening to me, no pun intended. After hearing her findings and proposal for new lighting regulations in the French Quarter, dispelling the belief that “brighter is better,” I will never think of light in the same way.

The other main project of the VCCF was planning a large fundraising gala that will take place in October of this year. In helping in various ways to plan this event I learned how much time and effort goes into planning an event of this scale and the importance of fundraising in the successful endeavors of a non-profit organization. The more invitations that go out, the higher the fundraising potential of the event, so I spent a lot of time sending out information packets about the VCCF to potential new members. Though I was working for the VCCF, I also was able to work with the VCC and their staff. They had recently relocated to New Orleans City Hall from their office in the French Quarter and I spent most of time stationed at their office in City Hall. I was able to sit in on the monthly Commission meeting and the bi-monthly Architectural Committee meetings. In working at City Hall and sitting in on both meetings, I was able to get a look at how city government works and also how legislative bodies like the VCC operate.

In my time spent with both organizations I gained valuable and enriching knowledge and experience in a variety of domains. I learned the ins-and-outs of running an office, the need for historic preservation and all the hard work and time it entails, and the importance of fundraising events and campaigns. My experience this

summer was both an enjoyable and educational one, and I owe many thanks to my supervisor, Rachel Robinson, the board members at Felicity, the VCC and their staff, and Sewanee's Career and Leadership Development office for giving me this invaluable opportunity. I learned all of what goes into running a non-profit and also the hard work that goes into historic preservation and how necessary it is for a community, both culturally and economically. In my career, I would love to be able to further the cause of preservation. I plan on attending law school and am very interested in studying preservation law. Throughout this experience, I learned vital skills throughout this experience that will be important to me as I enter the working world after graduation.