

## **Internship Report**

This summer, I was given special opportunity to work as an intern at the World Affairs Council of Atlanta. The Council is a nonpartisan organization that works to connect and present international issues to the general public, corporations, and governmental and non-governmental organizations of Atlanta. The organization carries out this important task by providing a forum, serving as a source of expertise, and running a research project on global issues. The organization is also affiliated with Georgia State University's Robinson College of Business and is a member of the World Affairs Council of America, a national organization.

I was given special opportunity because while there have been Sewanee interns who worked at the Council, I was the first Sewanee intern to work with the organization's programming team. Previous Sewanee interns had worked with Dr. Chris Brown with the research team he leads. The programming team carries out tasks like membership operations, program managing, and council administration. Programs the Council runs include Global Strategic Leadership Forum, business roundtables, public programs (country/issue briefings and forum for visiting diplomats), Young Leaders (a separate membership program of the Council for young professionals in the community), and others.

As an intern, I had a chance to engage myself in a wide variety of tasks. During the early days of my internship, I assisted my team by researching topics related to Council programs and community outreach. One of the big research projects I was involved with was research on a list of companies that are mostly headquartered in Atlanta. It was my job to find out which countries of the world they were interested in or already operated in. This research was done so the

Council can develop strategies to gain memberships from these companies. When I soon gained a better knowledge of how the organization worked, I started doing other tasks like drafting program notices and messages to Council members and the Atlanta community. I worked with many emails and newsletters the Council sent out. By being involved with these tasks, I was able to learn how the organization communicates with its members and the community and how the organization promotes its events. In the process, I improved my communication skills.

I also had a chance to attend two of the events the Council hosted. One event was called Global Health and Africa, which is part of the Council's annual series known as Atlanta Summit, held in cooperation with CARE USA and the Washington, DC-based think-tank Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). The event was a forum for dialogue on the health issues of Africa featuring important politicians and business leaders. The second event I attended was a luncheon that was hosted at the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta. I listened to a presentation about issues in Ukraine by Sheila Tschinkel, a former senior vice president at the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta. I helped out by assisting guests in these events. Attending them was a great experience since I found out about important global issues and witnessed first-hand what the Council's programs are really like. Additionally, it was certainly a valuable experience to meet global leaders and hear their opinions.

During the second month of my internship, I was given a job to manage the Council's social media. I managed the Council's Facebook, YouTube, Flickr, LinkedIn, and Twitter accounts. I uploaded articles related to the Council, videos of the events, and photos of the events. I also looked for a way for the Council to make a better use of social media and

organized the settings of Council's accounts. From this, I learned that social media is now truly essential for organizations that aim to reach out to the general public and community. Social media skills are actual skills that must be acquired to promote and connect the organization to people. I came to develop these skills while I managed the Council's social media accounts.

Data maintenance was another type of task I was involved with. I spent many hours compiling and organizing the information of the Council's previous events. This gave statistics and overview of the Council's previous events for the staff members to use. The programming team can use the data to determine what type of future events the Council should host next. Another type of data maintenance I was involved with was to organize contact information of the Council's members with software. Lastly, a special project ran by the interns this summer was drafting a new intern manual. The organization was in need of a more updated and comprehensive intern manual for future interns in the programming team. This was nearly completed when I left the Council.

Overall, my internship experience at the World Affairs Council of Atlanta definitely helped me to grow both professionally and personally. The experience taught me various skills and lessons. In fact, just working in the office environment for the first time made this experience invaluable. I am really glad that experience took place in an organization closely related to international issues and business, which are topics I am interested in. Furthermore, learning about the inner workings of a nonprofit organization and being part of it was both exciting and rewarding. I also had a chance to meet and work with great people. There are only few staff members in the Council, so I got to meet and interact with all of them. I learned

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the importance and joy of teamwork. This experience certainly offered me an insight on what to expect for certain parts of the professional field of international relations and furthered my interests of the field. I believe that my summer spent interning at the World Affairs Council of Atlanta will serve as an important building block for my future career.