

For ten weeks in the summer of 2012, I was a student intern at the United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA). Thanks to the avid support of Sewanee alumni David Roman and Davis Jones, and Sewanee's Environmental Studies Internship Fund, I was able to secure an internship with the Office of Environmental Compliance Assurance (OECA), specifically in the International Compliance Assurance Division (ICAD). I study Environmental Policy and International & Global Studies at Sewanee. To complement my studies, my goal for this internship was to learn about the approach of the public sector to environmental protection and governance and to discern how to orient my future career steps to work for the advancement of sustainable economic and environmental development. In addition to my involvement with ICAD, I was able to achieve this goal through my involvement with two other entities within the functions of the US EPA: the International Network for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement (INECE) and the National Enforcement Training Institute (NETI).

As an international student at Sewanee hoping to pursue a career in sustainable development work at the international level, I was very fortunate to work closely with the members of the International Compliance Assurance Division. Though a small division, the scope of the work they do is far-reaching. Throughout the summer, I was given a series of tasks that allowed me to learn about international and United States environmental legislation that has international bearing. I was also exposed to capacity-building work that the US EPA carries out to promote stronger environmental governance internationally. I started my first day by scanning Annual Reports of exports of Spent Lead-Acid Batteries to Canada to make documents available publicly under the Freedom of Information Act. Through this assignment, I learned about the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, and the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal that require these reporting documents between countries. I was also asked to translate and compile documents for several meetings between EPA and

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environmental agencies in other countries such as Mexico, Chile, the Central America Free Trade Agreement countries, and China; in return, I was invited to attend some of these meetings. One of the most memorable experiences for me was the opportunity to attend a meeting between the US EPA and a delegation from the Chinese Ministry of Environmental Protection and the Environmental Defense Fund China Program. I was able to learn about the memorandum of understanding within these two agencies and witness the proceedings of a diplomatic meeting that aims to build collaboration in environmental governance in China and the United States. I was able to briefly practice my Chinese language skills and better understand the proceedings under a memorandum of understanding. I was also given the task to serve as a contact point with the Mexican environmental enforcement authority, PROFEPA, to gather documents for a verification request of PROFEPA to the EPA Region 6 in Texas. This task allowed me to use my language skills to facilitate communication between English and Spanish speakers. Another interesting case that emerged during my time with ICAD was one that involved the export of defective electronic inventory of a transnational company in Costa Rica, my home country, into their facility in Texas. Through my conversations with an EPA Attorney, I learned about a bilateral agreement between the two countries and develop a further understanding of the Basel Convention.

My main project involved an international training course on the Principles of Environmental Compliance and Enforcement, which is taught to environmental enforcement agents abroad through the US EPA and the International Network of Environmental Compliance and Enforcement (INECE). My work consisted of updating the content and references of the facilitator's manual and other didactic material, which required close and constant communication with the developers and instructors of the course. Working on this project was very rewarding because it gave me the opportunity to work with very admirable environmental enforcers, learn a lot of environmental enforcement concepts and procedures, and understand some of the logistical proceeding of capacity building efforts internationally. The updated materials that I assembled will

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be used in November 2012 during an international training event for the East African Network for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement, in Zanzibar, and future international enforcement training sessions.

I also worked with other members of the International Network for Environmental Compliance Enforcement (INECE) on other tasks. I had the honor to work with members of the Secretariat of INECE by writing summaries of article publications from the most recent international conference on environmental compliance and enforcement, which were published in the website of this organization. This project not only allowed me to use my writing skills, but also gave me the opportunity to learn about the most recent case studies by environmental enforcement experts around the world. My second biggest project was for the Seaport Environmental Security Network (SESN), which is a subgroup of INECE. SESN works to promote environmental enforcement specifically at seaports and is currently considering developing a training course for customs agents on hazardous waste inspections and enforcement. My work consisted of researching courses around the world that train customs agents on environmental enforcement at seaports. My research was instrumental for their efforts because I was able to identify institutions and contact points in strategic countries that will be useful as this working group develops this course. After verifying the lack of training on environmental enforcement at seaports, I worked closely with a member of SESN to develop a draft outline for a course on hazardous waste enforcement at seaports. This project gave me the opportunity to research existing materials and publications by the Seaport Environmental Security Network, the World Customs Organization, the Center for Environmental Cooperation, and the Secretariat of the Basel Convention. Through this project, I was able to enhance my research skills and take part in the pedagogical aspect of capacity building for better environmental governance. It is extremely rewarding to know that the references and contacts I gathered will serve to eventually train enforcers at seaports around the world.

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I was also able to be a part of educational seminars of the US EPA's National Enforcement Training Institute for law clerks and student interns. Given the work of the agency and that the vast majority of interns in the EPA were law students, these seminars focused on the legal tools that the US EPA uses to achieve its mission of protecting human health and the environment. For example, I attended a training session for lawyers on administrative hearings and trials, which gave me the opportunity to witness the simulation of an administrative hearing with one of the administrative law judges of the EPA. Other seminars discussed the work of the US EPA on environmental justice, global environmental leadership, and training sessions on United States' environmental legislation such as the National Environmental Policy Act, the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, and the Clean Water Act. This program allowed me to develop a better understanding of the role of the US EPA in environmental governance. Moreover, some of the programming developed by NETI included visits to the US Supreme Court, the White House, and an opportunity to meet EPA administrator Lisa P. Jackson.

My time living in Washington D.C. has been one of the most memorable experiences during my time as a student at Sewanee and has served to enhance my studies of Environmental Policy and International & Global Studies. As an international student and visitor to the United States, I enjoyed the opportunity to be exposed to the rich history and culture of the DC metropolitan area. Moreover, many of the conversations that I had this summer have helped me discern some of the paths I can pursue upon the end of my studies at Sewanee to enter the field of international sustainable development. For example, an informational interview that I held with an environmental economist at the World Bank is already useful for my independent study work at Sewanee and has also given me references in my home country. This internship experience helped me develop skills in research, language, public speaking, and improve my knowledge-base on environmental governance in the public sector. I am grateful to Sewanee Alumni David Roman,

Davis Jones, and the Sewanee Environmental Studies Internship Fund for enabling me to have such a memorable experience.