

This summer I interned at Valmont Investments in New Orleans, LA, which is a real estate company that specializes in renovating and “flipping” homes in the New Orleans area, building new homes, and property management. Valmont mostly deals in residential real estate, but the company recently renovated a property on historic Magazine Street, which features a commercial, as well as residential, space. They are also planning to build single-family homes on lots that they have purchased on Cadiz Street. A large house on Joliet Street was also just purchased, and Valmont plans to renovate it and then put it on the market.

My responsibilities at Valmont varied, but I mostly focused on redesigning the company’s website. When I first began working on this project, I was unaware that HTML5 and CSS even existed, or that they were necessary to building an attractive website. But, given time and persistence, I learned how to use these and built a satisfactory website. Actually, now that I have used these so much, I plan on taking a computer science class next year at Sewanee. Other than working on the website, I was also responsible for estimating the cost of the company’s next building project. I was given plans for a house, and had to calculate how much interior/exterior paint, lighting fixtures, doors, windows, sheetrock, etc. would be needed, then get an estimate from the different paint, window, etc. companies in town for how much these items would cost, and then calculate a total for the entire project. I was responsible for organizing and filing financial and insurance statements that came into the office. I also shadowed the company’s property manager, Kaylee Smith, when she showed apartments and had appointments at building sites to get estimates from contractors.

I learned a lot while working at Valmont, but learning HTML5 so I could write code for the website was the most challenging and rewarding part of my job. Working with an architect’s

plans was also something I had never done before. I now know how to use them to estimate how much it will cost to build a house. I also learned everything that is involved with property management: collecting rent, building maintenance, showing apartments. This internship taught me many things that I could not have learned in the classroom.

This internship has helped guide me towards the kind of career I would like to have. I learned that real estate, while challenging and engaging, is not where my passion lies. I think that finance may be a better fit for my goals and skill set. However, I would not have realized this without the experience I gained from my internship, so I am very grateful that I was able to work at Valmont Investments for the summer.