

I began the Freshman Year Program/Finding Your Place internship on June 10th of the 2013 summer. I was to help research and organize materials for this new freshman program. The program was brand new and therefore, many details had to be decided upon and worked through. At first, I wasn't sure what would be expected of me. I had heard very little about the program, only that it was still being developed and that I was there to help organize. Even as I was applying for the internship, what would be needed of me continued to change. When I arrived at campus and it was finally decided that I was to research the history of Sewanee: The University of the South. Professor McDonough, the professor who was my strongest advocate during the application process, was interested in the Dixie Highway, the first automotive highway that connected the northern half of our country with the southern half. Part of the Dixie highway was our very own University Avenue. I would make trips to the University library in search of materials to help me discover the history of the roads and trails that surrounded our campus.

Initial research in the University Library led to more questions. These questions required additional research at the Tennessee State Library and Archives in Nashville. It was after three trips to Nashville that I finally compiled over forty pages of notes on the Dixie highway, the Mountain Goat tail, and several founding legends concerning Sewanee, TN. After several weeks of research I finally began to understand why this was important. I was a rising senior and I knew almost nothing about my school. I had lived here and bragged about my University, loving every minute of it. But it was not until I dug deep into the library and archives that I truly appreciated the University that I loved. In these stories of the past and in books others had written about Sewanee, I realized that many curious people had already discovered what I had only recently uncovered. Knowing the history of our home is important because it makes us who we are. I know this is just a temporary home for some people. But for freshman this is the place

where they will spend the next four years, where they will learn, make mistakes, get in trouble, make friendships that last a life time, and maybe even meet their future spouse. The four years in this environment can be so incredibly life-changing. It is immensely important to understand the land, the buildings, and the history of this school. The development of this area makes it what it is today, and this school will shape and make people into something more in the future. You need to understand the past in order to appreciate the present and prepare for the future.

After about two weeks of research, I was to begin assisting Professor Deborah McGrath in organizing the opening day of the program. I helped to order and design the water bottles that were to be the greeting gift for the incoming freshman. I also ordered various other supplies that would be needed for August 11, 2013. However, the most important job I was assigned was to gather and organize the Course pack that would be needed for the seven sections of the FYP. I spent many hours in DuPont Library scanning and editing the readings that would be going into that Course Pack. On occasion, I would go to the book store to order books and to talk to the new Book Store manager, Cyndi. Continuing the flow of communication was vital to this program. At times, thoughts or considerations would be overlooked because participants and organizers of this program could be sending hundreds of emails to each other. I provided face-to-face time in moments of confusion or disagreement.

I cannot stress how important this course is for all incoming freshman, and how happy I am that I made those treks to libraries and archives to learn everything I could about Sewanee in these short summer weeks. As a senior I now understand how important my journey at this University was and is to my development as a person. I only understand my own growth because I have studied how Sewanee has grown and changed over the years; what the amazing and important people gave when they put everything they had into this school and community

because they believed it could help people change and grow to be better. History is so important, and I love the time and energy I spent into learning about my own history. It may not feel like it at first, but Sewanee's history is my history, and it will become the freshmen's history. Knowing this can only help them.

Through this internship I developed my research skills, discovered a passion for local history, and nurtured my natural passion for organization and event planning. I was able to stay at Sewanee for a summer and add another wonderful opportunity to my resume. While my internship was only six weeks long, it was a wonderful experience. The only downside I can propose is that this internship was not able to be the full 8 or 10 weeks we had originally hoped for. I do believe I could have been of help on campus when the freshmen arrived, as well as being present later on as final decisions were coming to close and see those decisions carried out. Leaving so early in the summer will leave a lot of different assignments dropped, such as making sure the Course Pack edits go through, that it is printed, then finally sent to the bookstore for the freshman to buy, seeing the delivery and set up of the welcome tent, organizing the gifts that the freshman will receive upon arrival. Also, if I had been allowed to stay longer I could have developed my research that I ascertained for Professor McDonough into something more than just reading notes. I may have been able to write out a paper that he would have found useful for his class.

Despite all of these 'maybe' events, this internship will significantly help my future career goals. I am interested in pursuing a Master's and Ph.D. at some point in life, and then I would like to do research for a university. My time at Sewanee has given me specific experience in the field of academic research. I have now worked at a museum, studied abroad, and assisted in academic research. Being successful in all of the opportunities that I have sought over the

summers will help me when I attempt to achieve more in the academic world. I will always be thankful for Professors McDonough, McGrath, and Bachman for giving me this opportunity to advance and develop my skills in academic research.