

The Jackalope Brewing Company is relatively new to the craft beer scene in Nashville, TN. Officially opened in 2011, the young company provided me with a great opportunity to learn all aspects of a small brewery. As the company's only intern I worked closely with the three owners, taproom manager, and assistant brewer. Bailey Spaulding, the CEO and brew master, along with Robyn Virball who acts as the CFO, founded the brewery. Steve Wright, the brewery's first intern quickly became a co-owner and currently serves as COO. Because of the small size and close proximity with other experienced professionals, my responsibilities were varied and ranging. I believe brewing is 25% about making beer while the other 75% is cleaning and sanitation. Therefore, a lot of my responsibilities involved cleaning. When our distributor, Bounty Beverage Brigade, returned dirty and empty kegs on Monday from local bars and restaurants, my job was to clean them. The process of cleaning a keg is simple: In order to properly clean a keg, you flush it with water, rinse with caustic (a powerful cleaning agent), rinse with more water, add sanitizer, and then fill the keg with carbon dioxide. Other duties included a process we called CIP, or "clean-in-place." We would CIP everything after the beer had been in contact with a surface. This included our 15-barrel brew house, the fermenting tanks, and the conditioning tanks. Other responsibilities included filling kegs, visiting accounts (bars and restaurants around Nashville), milling the grain needed to create the wort, adding hops, transferring the beer from the boiling tank to the fermenter and eventually to the brite tank, and educating customers on how beer is made and the Jackalope story.

I learned a lot of tangible skills from my internship with the Jackalope Brewing Company. I was immersed in beer and brewing knowledge from the first day and it is a never-ending education. From differing temperatures, to caring for yeast and proper sanitation, I continue to learn about beer styles and a seemingly infinite system of causes and effects resulting from a myriad amount of factors (proper cultivation of yeast, sanitation, eliminating combative bacteria). For instance, if we brew at a different temperature, add hops a minute later, or pitch the

yeast differently

than a previous batch then that will result in a different (or noticeable to us) taste. Because our beers are a 100% handcrafted product there is human error, which is not always a bad thing. Unlike some other breweries that rely on automated systems to reduce costs and error, we rely on conventional brewing knowledge and physical labor to create our craft beer.

On a daily basis I worked directly with our assistant brewer, Will Hadley, by helping him in the day's daily assignments. I accomplished a lot in my internship: a lot of specific knowledge of brewing equipment, a medial amount of science related to brewing, the brewing process and how different ingredients contribute to a different style or taste of beer. I also learned a lot about small business. As a new and small brewery in Nashville, Jackalope has a devout following. But in order to achieve the goal of becoming a regional brewery like SweetWater Brewery in Atlanta, GA one must always continue to work hard by maintaining current customer relations, establishing new relationships with bars and restaurants, buy supplies, plan to meet future demand, schedule so that you are always working efficiently and producing at a maximum output, all the while cultivating and growing a brand in market and into new markets.

A specific example of my growth and development as a brewer occurred when I was the only able body in the warehouse. All of a sudden, an account arrives and asks for a keg. I proceed to check our inventory but have to inform the account that we do not have his exact order – he needs a ½ barrel keg and we only have two ¼ barrel kegs. I immediately offer to transfer the two quarter barrels into one half barrel for the customer. Ten minutes later following some mechanical adjustments with equipment, sanitation, and some carbon dioxide I proudly presented the customer with exactly what he needed. This action proved to the other employees who were out that I possessed the will, drive, and knowledge to assist our customers in their demand for our legendary craft beer.

While I know possess many tangible skills related to brewing, I also gained many intangible skills from my internship. The insight I received in hindsight is also shaping my

current career

goals. My taste and preference for good, high quality craft beer is a direct result from working so hard everyday to create a satisfying product to enjoy. I really enjoy the alcohol industry, specifically craft beer. I enjoy it for several reasons and many of my reasons result from my time Jackalope and its employees. The craft beer industry has a story to tell, beers have different names meaning different things, brewers, owners, bartenders and other employees all have a passion for their job. They all have a story of how they came to discover their passion. I have not met anyone in this industry that does not love what he or she does.

Another reason I want to remain in this industry is because craft beer is like nice artwork – it requires patience, creativity, criticism, and lots of practice. The industry is selling a craft, a labor of love, someone's creative brainchild and passion. My last reason for loving this industry is that of the community revolving it. After only 2 short months I have come to meet several different sides of the industry from distributors to bars and restaurants. I have even met other brewers from out of town who come in to inquire at our practices and share in their own. It is an industry where everyone involved shares in the glory. People respect each other, help one another, and grow together. People innovate and collaborate in order to further their own passion for good beer and to strengthen the idea of craft beer in the greater alcohol market. As is such, I would like to remain deeply involved whether it is in the production side or the sales side. Who knows, maybe even one day I will name a beer after my own experiences in Sewanee – Morgan's Steep IPA has a nice ring to it.