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Summer Internship Summary  
U.S. Water Alliance  
September 1, 2013

This past summer I had the unique opportunity to intern for 10 weeks in Washington, DC at the U.S. Water Alliance. This organization is a 501(c)(3) educational nonprofit that seeks to promote sustainability in water usage and change the way our nation views water as a whole. They promote a holistic water-shed based approach to water, and their goal is to bring together broad cross-sectional interests from private businesses to public entities into a common place and promote dialogue on how we can obtain a more sustainable future when it comes to water.

The Alliance works to identify and implement specific strategic programs and initiatives that support its essential objectives such as: The U.S. Water Prize, One Water Management Network, Urban Water Sustainability Council, and the Business Advisory Council. With a self-proclaimed "lean and mean" staff of five water and policy professionals, most of my job was simply helping staff and running these various programs.

Highlights of some of the things that I did were writing NewsWaves articles and press releases. I attended meetings at Resources for the Future, U.S. Green Building Council, and Fort Belvoir with the Army Corps of Engineers. I also attended a Senate Committee Meeting on Energy and Natural Resources. I communicated on a daily basis with other environmentally related groups such as the Conservation Fund, Nature Conservancy, EPA, and many more. I participated with a group of eight of these NGOs in a series of meetings that

dealt with how they were going to propose a more centralized approach to urban green space objectives to the Secretary of the Interior, Sally Jewell. When I wasn't attending a meeting outside of our office, I was helping our staff in any way possible. For example, I was given the task of finding a new conference calling service, and I was able to set up to use a new and improved service while saving thousands of dollars a year. This was very rewarding for me and really made me feel like I was having a direct impact to the organization. There was quite a lot of work to be done during this busy time of year, so each and every day at the US Water Alliance was busy and brought new challenges and unique opportunities.

During my time at the Alliance we hosted a number of major events like our annual One Water Management Meeting. This daylong event held in D.C. brought together leaders and executives from government agencies, NGOs, and industry to talk about plans to work toward improved, more integrated water management. My job was to take notes throughout the day, and afterwards I was given the opportunity to summarize a final write-up, which would outline the successes of the meeting as well as lay out future goals of the One Water Management Network. This summary, along with a press release that I wrote, was distributed to all of the participants and used in our next Board Meeting. I also assisted in the preparation work for our Cincinnati National Roundtable on Water Quality Trading in July. Towards the end of my time at the Alliance, I was helping prepare for the One Water Leadership Summit in Los Angeles in September.

I feel like I really learned a lot while working for the U.S. Water Alliance this summer. It gave me a sense of accomplishment to use the knowledge I have gained from my classes at Sewanee in a work setting. One of the things that I will take away from this experience is that I am more confident and comfortable communicating with people who are older than me. Working this summer and learning how to live on my own takes some of the nerves out of looking for full-time employment next year, and even makes me excited about the process. The staff at the U.S. Water Alliance was extremely helpful in introducing me to as many people as possible around D.C. I was able to do lots of networking and now feel like as I look for a job next summer, I have a connection to more and more people.

Looking back on my summer at the U.S. Water Alliance in Washington, D.C. I am extremely thankful to those that helped me along the way. Thank you very much to the ladies at Career Services at Sewanee and those who are so generous to sponsor the Tonya Public Affairs Internship Fund. This funding provided me with the financial backing that made this internship possible, and I cannot thank you enough. Thank you to Ben, Lorraine, Natalia, Hope, and Kristyn at the U.S. Water Alliance for taking me in and letting me be a part of this great organization.