

Working as an intern for Franklin County Mayor Richard Stewart is a diverse job, but simply put, the job of the summer intern is to learn as much as possible and to complete all assignments to the best of her abilities. I fulfilled my job description by completing general office duties, by attending meetings, county events, and conferences, and by asking questions. Office duties included receiving and sending correspondence via email, fax, telephone, and mail as directed and instructed, greeting and directing courthouse guests, writing proclamations, scheduling appointments for the mayor, and other tasks such as printing obituaries, witnessing weddings, making copies, stuffing mail boxes, etc. Every office duty triggered questions, and every office duty made me more aware of the various happenings and events taking place in Franklin County. As the summer intern, I toured Franklin County with the mayor as guide, attended several county committee meetings, and attended every possible county or regional event that I could. None of my visits encompasses every aspect of my job as the mayor's intern as did my visit to the Moore-Cortner Funeral Home to show support for the family of Lance-Corporal Gregory A. Posey.

Lance-Corporal Posey (Greg) was a United States Marine to whom I had written a letter on the mayor's behalf. Greg's letter began as a regular office duty assigned July 9th. However, Greg's letter was especially challenging for two reasons: (1) because this assignment came only with Greg's address and a note saying something like, "Write a letter for me to Greg in Afghanistan" and (2) because I sat in front of the computer for at least an hour or two thinking, "If I were a soldier in Afghanistan, what would I want to 'hear' or read in a letter from the mayor of my home county?" Greg's letter went out perhaps on July 11th after the mayor crossed out a section of my letter and inserted some of his own words. On the morning of July 31st, I wrote in my journal, "NO OBITUARIES this morning! PRAISE GOD from whom all blessings flow!" Printing obituaries was my least favorite office task, and July 31st was one of the few days that I went to work and there were no obituaries to print. A few hours later after I had rejoiced at the lack of obituaries, I found out that Lance-Corporal Posey had died the previous night from injuries he sustained while fighting for the privileges that I have, but do not deserve. While I was sitting safely in an office thinking about what Greg might want to hear from the mayor and from me, Greg was in Afghanistan fighting for me and for this sweet, sweet land of liberty that I call home. Greg died on July 30th at the age of twenty-two, but I lived through the night only because of grace. I printed Greg's obituary on August 3, 2009 and turned it in to the mayor while praying still that there would be no obituaries the next morning.

My summer and my TONYA Internship were marked by a tremendous, undeserved amount of God's grace, and I am so thankful to God, to Career Services, to all who assisted me as I was preparing for this internship, and especially to the TONYA committee for making this experience possible.