

Bates Center for

PURPOSEFUL | WORK

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Please summarize the role, tasks, or impact of your internship this summer.

This past summer, I was an intern working remotely with U3 Advisors. In my role, I assisted my team members on ongoing project work, creating presentations for final projects, carrying out market research, creating maps with Social Explorer, and using other platforms such as Excel, Slack, and Dropbox. I have grown in my understanding of urban and city planning and I am more aware of the ways in which anchor institutions can contribute to the economic development of a city/place. I have a better idea of how comprehensive a project lifespan is from the drafting of proposals, applying for grants, meeting with clients, carrying out financial analysis to meeting with the developers to start the physical work. Through networking, I was able to receive valuable advice from my colleagues and learn about how to professionally advance in my career.

What parts of this internship feel “purposeful” to you – in the sense that they align with your interests, strengths, and values? Describe.

This internship felt very purposeful to me because of the type of impact the company prided itself on. U3 Advisors is a firm that not only aims to positively impact the lives of the communities it serves but is also made up of people who are truly inspirational in the work they do. I got a chance to have multiple one-on-one sessions with the firm members and I learned so much about their own professional journeys and their reason for working with U3 Advisors at this time. In order to have a transformational firm, you need to have the people working behind the scenes happy and willing to do that kind of work. That is what I saw in my internship. I hope to gain the same type of experience in the future such that I am working for a company that seeks to touch and improve the lives of others. In addition to that, I got exposure to a field that I was interested in, this being urban development. This gave me a stronger understanding of the potential roles I could go into if I were to follow a similar career path.

Name a skill in which you gained confidence this summer.

I was able to practice my interpersonal skills the most this past summer. Working remotely definitely changed the approach I took with connecting to people and therefore I was more intentional with the time I got conversing with others. I learned how to navigate talking about the project-specific details vs career development and making connections with my colleagues.

In what ways did this experience alter or confirm your planned career trajectory?

I believe that the experience opened me to thinking extensively about other career paths that I had not considered. I interacted with people who were at the peak of their careers and also people who were transitioning into their main career field. The internship slightly altered my thinking process to steer me away from being fixed in my approach to my future career. This was a valuable learning experience for me.

What advice would you offer someone who is considering applying to your specific internship?

I would advise them to be open-minded to the experience and express their curiosity about what they are interested in. My supervisors were amazing people and went out of their way to connect me with projects I was interested in. In addition to that, I would urge them to request to be included in specific project calls so as to get insight into how negotiations and deals are carried out.

What is one thing you've learned in the classroom setting here at Bates that you were able to apply to your summer work? OR: What perspectives/learning opportunities did you gain from this internship that were not necessarily available within the classroom?

Something that I was able to put into practice was learning on the go. For most of the tasks that I was assigned in the beginning, I was not too familiar with how to do the task. However, instead of feeling self-conscious about not knowing how to do it, I gave it a go for a couple of tries and then reached out to someone to assist me when I was unable to figure it out. I felt his approach worked best for the type of work I was doing.

Based on what you learned about yourself and a potential career path through your internship, what is one thing you will do differently, try, join, or stop doing this fall?

One thing that I am changing as a result of this internship is my mindset. I truly believe that I learned more about myself and how I should go about my career trajectory. I spoke to the CEO and some of the leaders in the firm who really advocated to not put yourself in a box. It is imperative to do the self-work and the real work necessary to achieve your goals. Therefore, I should open my mind to all the possibilities and align myself with those I am interested in.