



James Madison University Non-Profit Studies

Fall 2021 Internship Experiences

Rachel Blouch:

I grew a lot during my internship with SOAR 365. This agency works to ensure their students are able to reach their academic, behavioral, vocational, and developmental goals. Prior to my internship experience my professional goals were very different, but working with SOAR 365 gave me a new passion and led me to do choose my major field practicum with a special education school. Throughout my internship I felt a part of the team and made some important professional connections. The skills and knowledge I acquired through my experience with SOAR365 will allow me to advance toward my goals and aspirations.

My roles and responsibilities varied throughout the internship, which caused some anxiety at first, but helped me learn adaptability and flexibility. I learned first-hand a lot about the struggles faced by organizations in the nonprofit sector and how each component of the organization is important. I was granted a higher level of autonomy than expected, demonstrating to myself my competence. Classes from both the Nonprofit Studies minor and my Social Work major helped me navigate the internship successfully.

Matthew Mee:

My internship with the Bolder Advocacy team at the Alliance for Justice honed many of the skills that added to my professional development. While I will not pursue the work I did at the internship, it exposed me to the possibility of consulting work. The most enjoyable part of the internship involved working with people. All staff made me feel at home an valued, especially my supervisor and the organization's new President. This enhanced my confidence and learning while at the internship.

The Nonprofit Studies coursework provided me with theories and concepts that I readily applied at the Alliance for Justice. For example, I could identify the change management techniques the new President used and how relationships were so important for the organization. The experience clarified to me my strengths and where I can find the most success. I learned a great deal during the semester, about application of coursework and a surprising amount about myself.

Hannah Taylor:

My internship at Vine & Fig New Community Project was challenging at times, pushing me to the edge of my comfort zone, but allowed me to develop and strengthen my professional skills, collaborate with individuals, and establish future career goals. The experience allowed me to use critical thinking skills and previous knowledge about nonprofit organizations to apply my skills toward work in new departments in which I had no previous knowledge. I now feel more confident than ever I am on the right path for me, given the professional and personal skills I learned at Vine & Fig. It gave me experience in collaborating with others. I would recommend an internship there as an enjoyable and educational experience. The staff are committed and positive, they prioritize communication and encourage personal development. It pushed me to be my best self. Previous Nonprofit Studies courses contributed to certain aspects of the organization, such as grant writing and the entrepreneur spirit. Through the internship I could see the differences between nonprofit organizations. The concepts and skills I learned will be extremely valuable to me as I move into the professional world upon graduation from college. I am grateful for the experience and plan to continue volunteering for Vine & Fig as I can.