

My Summer as a Development Intern At the National Women's History Museum

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Hannah Hilgeman newcomb@tulane.edu

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This summer I interned with the National Women's History Museum as a development intern. I assisted with a variety of projects, but mainly spent my time compiling research profiles. These profiles were made about potential donors to the

museum or were biographies for past board members. To create these profiles, I followed a template provided to me from the Museum. I was then given a list of potential donors and asked to complete the profiles about these potential donors. Donor research profiles typically consist of educational and career background on the individual as well as their estimated wealth and giving capacity. I also looked for any ties that the individual or corporation had to women's rights or women's organizations. For example, if the individual or organization had previously donated or had a connection with an organization associated with a women's cause, this is a great indicator that the individual or organization might be interested in donating to the National Women's History museum as well. I used a lot of different sources to compile these research profiles, including a database called DonorSearch. DonorSearch was extremely useful, as it helped provide me with past giving histories for not only individuals but also for other foundations or organizations that typically facilitate philanthropic giving. Knowing a foundation's past giving history also helps to indicate whether they might be open to donating to the Museum or have an interest in the arts or women's causes.

During the course of my internship, I was able to complete numerous research profiles on both individuals, foundations, and corporations. I learned how to really investigate from a development/fundraising perspective and how to utilize different research techniques to do so. I learned more about how nonprofit giving works and the steps that cultural institutions such as museums go through in order to secure gifts to their organization. I wasn't aware of this process but am quite intrigued by it. I grew to appreciate how much goes on behind the scenes of cultural institutions and museums; the staff and volunteers truly put in a great deal of work to keep them running and open for public enjoyment. Overall, I had a great summer with NWHM and am excited to see the Museum grow!