

Diving into the World of Reproductive Health and Reproductive Rights with Planned Parenthood Gulf Coast

Fri, 09/28/2018 - 00:00

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Isabelle Lian newcomb@tulane.edu

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Hello friends! My name is Isabelle Lian and I am a sophomore majoring in Neuroscience and minoring in Management. I am so excited to be interning with Planned Parenthood Gulf Coast (PPGC) and working with NCI this fall semester. These first few weeks have been so interesting and eye-opening! Reproductive rights and reproductive health have been an interest of mine for quite a while, but I have never had the opportunity to truly contribute to the cause.

My responsibilities at Planned Parenthood at this point are centered in the public affairs department. This department is one of the three that are housed at PPGC's New Orleans branch (the other two being education and communications). As of now, I have worked on several tasks for multiple projects. Over these first three weeks, I have been compiling an Excel spreadsheet of any organizations relevant to PPGC across Louisiana as well as identifying any possible events that PPGC could attend in the future. While practical in a sense that this research is opening up further channels of communication and collaboration among various social justice organizations in Louisiana, this project has helped me become more familiar with non-profit scene in the area.

Beginning the second and third week, I have been helping the department fine-tune several projects. PPGC will be holding its annual Fall Celebration this coming October 3rd. A huge part of that celebration is gathering present donors to thank them for their contributions and showcasing the accomplishments that PPGC has made over the year. My role in this was to call those donors and respectfully remind them to purchase tickets for the event. Another project was to redesign a volunteer flyer for upcoming canvassing events (pictured on the left). Sign up if you're free and interested!

This being my first time working internally with a non-profit, there have been many elements that have to be considered. So much work goes down behind the scenes—much of what you see manifested in PPGC education programs and initiatives are the culmination of so many minute, yet crucial, details put together. To make the loudest sound, it begins with the smallest specifics.

Ultimately, coming into a new work environment has always been somewhat difficult for me. I like to say that my confidence and comfort grows with experience, so the beginning of this internship was quite daunting to me. Especially as someone from the STEM realm, I felt that I lacked that tie to social justice that is so outwardly apparent for so many others. However, coming to Planned Parenthood has definitely calmed those initial fears. Being surrounded by coworkers who are so dedicated to reproductive health is honestly so inspiring. As a woman of color, it is so great to hear that more people share my same hope for a better future starting with women's empowerment and fighting for our right to choose what WE think is best for our own bodies.

With that, I am so excited for what is in store! From encouraging personal growth to making a difference in the New Orleans community that I now call home, Planned Parenthood is the place to be!

-Isabelle