

Back to reality

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It has since been two weeks into senior year at Tulane. I almost feel back on my feet, and I can certainly say I am happy to be back. After being abroad and then in DC for the summer, I knew I had to come back to New Orleans.

Looking back at the goals I set in the beginning of summer, I have definitely achieved some. I can definitely say that I have learned a lot more about APIA communities. This includes the Filipino community in New Orleans and more of Hawaii's history. It was very interesting to learn about how Smithsonian Asian Pacific

American Center (APAC) finds the artists that they work with, and it turns out that it happens very organically. The APIA artists are a community themselves, and APAC is able to use their network to reach others. I found this out by just being able to interact with artists that were moving in and out of the office. I was also able to work an event called Now You See Us that spotlighted artists from the

I am continuing to expand on my knowledge of racial politics through two of my classes at Tulane: Race, Ethnicity, and American Television and the Psychology of Diversity. The two classes further explore the complexities of what it means to be American and what it can be like to move through certain spaces.

Moving forward, I now know that I would consider taking a job in the museum field. It is a very interesting space that I feel could use some radical changes, and if I had the opportunity to be a part of that, I would. APAC threw me into the APIA community, and I only want to dive deeper in the future.

APAC also taught me that sometimes you must work within the system to make change. They had a social justice stance that had to be balanced because they were a federal institution that had to remain apolitical. It was interesting to see how they navigated this relationship of being a part of a larger, formal institution. This experience has also taught me that museums are not neutral, which is also a hashtag campaign. It is the idea that because people curate museums, all museums hold some sort of bias. There is this responsibility to the public to engage in discussions about what that means and what space that museum holds in the community they are in and the audience that they are catering to.

This experience has pushed me to ask questions about what it means to be a person with a complex, intersectional identity and the relationship I have with the space and people around me. It has also taught me about how to create inclusive and accessible spaces for all peoples. I hope to bring back these ideals and establish this inclusive environment at Tulane with the organizations that I am involved with.

Working at APAC was an amazing experience. From the site visits to the other interns to the staff, all of it created a summer that I will never forget. I remember being astounded by how much I was learning just by having conversations with anyone and everyone in the office. I would highly recommend interning at APAC and engaging with their work. I would recommend being passionate about some part of their APIA work, and also having your own passion project that you would like to pursue. It was a working summer, but it was definitely worth it.