

The End of A Great Summer

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Wow! What an awesome summer. I am so honored to have been able to be a part of the Brady Campaign and Center to Prevent Gun Violence this summer. I had a wonderful time working on a variety of tasks; such as planning our float in the CapitalPride Parade, working with our Brady Chapters, and helping plan our booth at Prevention Convention.

During my time at the Brady Campaign I was able to complete specific tasks that worked towards my learning objectives. I developed a deeper understanding of the gun violence prevention movement and learned the inner workings of advocacy grass roots organizations. With my objectives in mind, I took on the project of encouraging Brady chapters to attend Congressional Town Halls in their area and provided them with talking point to create an informative dialogue about the gun violence prevention movement. To be able to track these talking points, I created which contained fact sheets and questions for their representatives so that the conversation would be focused. This project not only helped me compile information that I had gained about the gun violence prevention movement, but also taught me a lot about working with grassroots organizations.

I am so pleased with how the summer went but am even more excited about what is coming up next! This fall I will be studying abroad in Amsterdam, focusing mainly on their public policy system. I tailored my classes abroad to be focused around their health care system; which will be interesting since this past summer I spent a fair amount of time discuss the health care system in relation to gun violence prevention movement. Once I am back in New Orleans I plan on continuing to utilize the information that I gained at the Brady Campaign by incorporating it into my discussions in public health courses. I look forward to being able to discuss how gun violence is a public health epidemic in my classes to help inform my classmates.

I realize that this internship has taught me a lot of different, but important, lessons in regards to grassroots and non-profits. I have learned the structure of grassroots organizations and how they are able to effectively implement their ideas to chapters. However, I now know that I want to learn more about how policy departments function in such non-profits. I hope to learn about the intersection between non-profits and public policy in the future because I realize that social movements and non-profits directly affect many of our policies.

Living and working in DC for two summers has allowed me to gain a lot of first hand knowledge about tips and tricks for the city. I think the most important piece of advice, for anyone interning at the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence or within the public policy realm, would be to get daily news updates and read them before work. Personally, I think that whenever you are working in DC it is crucial that you stay up to date on current events because a lot of the daily tasks will be in response to whatever is in the media for that day. A simple New York Times email briefing can be crucial some mornings and can effect change in the everyday

workflow.

I think that my ideals about gender and social justice have been reinforced a bit this summer. I think that it is crucial for individuals who identify as female to be strong-willed and powerful in the workspace. I think, especially with social justice work, females should be able to express their opinions freely and not be worried about the way it will be received. I think that a female's opinion is crucial because it will shed light onto different experiences that may affect the work they are focused on. And from what I can tell, many of the social justice organizations that I worked with feel the same way.

This summer I learned about being a more effective problem solver. My best take away was realizing the importance of having grassroots advocacy organizations. I think that I have never realized the true importance of these organizations but after this internship I realize that to be an effective problem solver I need to be able to effectively mobilize people who support a similar cause.

Well that is all for this summer!! It's really been an incredible time. If anyone has any questions about my work or interest in the internship, feel free to reach out!

Kiera Solomon