

Week 1: Getting Situated at Khalil Center

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KHALIL CENTER

Hey guys!

My name is Hafsa and I'm a rising sophomore at Tulane studying psychology. This summer, I'm interning at the Khalil Center in Glen Ellyn, Illinois (about an hour outside of Chicago). The center functions as both a psychological counseling clinic as well as a spiritual wellness center (for more information on what that means, check out their website <http://www.khalilcenter.com/index.html>).

A friend of mine had heard about the center looking for interns and recommended it to me back in March and I chose to apply for this internship due to the spiritual/religious component of it, as I was interested in seeing how the values of Islam were integrated into psychological health.

Having been here a week, I've met 2 of the clinicians who work at the center and learned a little bit about conducting a counseling session, how to handle unscheduled appointments, and how much paperwork goes into a client. I also learned about different support groups the center runs and how sometimes certain social taboos inhibit them. For me personally, that's something I want to look more into. Why do some place taboos on issues that would be better resolved through active discourse?

My first assignment at KC was to update all the patient files and enter them into an online program so that clinicians could more easily access them. Currently, I'm taking the information I entered and pulling out data that KC will use for research they are conducting regarding Islam and mental health awareness.

The center focuses a lot on building a spiritual community. There are about 5 mosques (place of worship for Muslims) nearby Khalil Center. I've been to one so far (where I walked in to a wedding ceremony), and I hope to get around to all of them by the end of my internship just to see what the spiritual community is like.

Aside from getting a chance to visit all the mosques in the area, I also hope to get a better sense of the Islamic perspective on mental health, learn about how the clinic runs, and see how to conduct different types of counseling sessions (family, individual, couples therapy).

Outside of work, I've also had some free time to go explore downtown Glen Ellyn. There are a lot of historical and natural sites to visit including an old movie theater and a few lakes. Hopefully over the next month I'll be able to explore Chicago as well, but for now it's back to work!

Until next time,
Hafsa