

Midpoint at Mama Maji

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My internship is unique in that I am working at an organization that values women first and foremost. Their belief is that women are the changemakers and all of the work that they do follows this mentality. More importantly, however, is the fact that the way they operate follows this mission as well. This is something I noticed from the get go in the way I was regarded by the organization, even as an intern, and something that I am very proud of.

From the onset I felt valued at Mama Maji. Like many young women, I tend to be insecure about my myself, my ideas, and the work I am able to produce. After just a few weeks at Mama Maji, however, I am already starting to let go of those doubts and embrace the kind of confidence that the organization strives to instill in all of the women they serve. At first, I felt that I did not perform well enough on some of the assignments I was given, but then I would find out that they were done successfully. While some of this success can be attributed to my own skills, my mind immediately credited the effort I put in and assistance from others. By the end of this internship, I hope to have accomplished enough to say, with confidence, that my work has been successful because of my skills, not because I got lucky or because I had a lot of help.

One skill that I have been spending a lot of time developing that is definitely transferable to my future career is research, but not just any kind of research. As a non-profit organization, Mama Maji really values getting to know its stakeholders and potential donors through conducting very thorough prospect research. I have created a number of profiles on individuals who would make for a mutually beneficial partnership with the organization, or who could provide it with further connections from their own networks. I quickly learned just how useful and enlightening this kind of research is, and it has already helped me advance some of my own projects at Mama Maji, namely my building a campus presence for the organization at Tulane. I have learned that the most successful projects always take the time to research best practices and what has already been done before, and then grow from there. I have also learned that networking and connecting with others who share similar ideals is invaluable and, nowadays, almost necessary if you want to amplify your impact.

Another skill that I will surely put to good use in the future that I have gained from this internship is the guidelines for writing and delivering an effective elevator pitch. In the non-profit world, it is essential to be able to deliver your mission concisely and with conviction in order to engage people and make them want to be a part of your work. I have been working one on one with my supervisor to craft my own personal pitch, and I must say I am very proud of what I've been able to come up with after such a short period of time.

Mama Maji has really allowed me to build these skills and others that align with my professional goals because they value my success, and that is something I am extremely thankful for.