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EMILY's List Internship Experience

I could not have asked for a more exhilarating summer to spend as an intern in Washington, D.C. With the upcoming election and unprecedented campaigns of Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump, the political climate in D.C. was fast-paced and exciting. I was granted the opportunity to live in a city where seemingly everyone was informed and interested in the day-to-day politics of the election. Everywhere I went, I heard people discussing the latest news or their opinions on the candidates. In some ways, it seemed insular and as though politics dominated life outside of my work. However, D.C. had much to offer beyond politics and I think it was extremely beneficial for me to immerse myself in the election and truly get a feel for the way the things I study in the classroom come to life.

Not only was the city itself amazing, but the work culture and people at EMILY's List taught me so much. EMILY's List is an organization that endorses and supports Democratic, pro-choice women running for state and federal office. I am highly interested in women's rights and women in politics, so this was the perfect organization for me to intern. This summer, we were supporting women through financial contributions, communications work, research and campaign consulting. I specifically worked in the communications department, which consisted of about eight women who all felt passionately about the work they do. It was amazing to see them work and collaborate on a daily basis and to help where I was needed. They worked long, hard hours during the week on even on the weekends, but were quick to remind one another and themselves that their work contributes to a cause they feel passionately about. It was inspiring to

see people who loved their jobs so much, and taught me that the world of working in politics is fervent and interesting.

I gained so much from my internship at EMILY's List because the communications department treated me like a real employee and gave me important responsibilities. Every morning, I was the first one in the office because I was in charge of sending press clips to our staff and campaigns. I gathered relevant EMILY's List and candidate mentions and important world, election and national news. It was a great way for me to learn about the way the news cycle works and to stay updated on current events.

My other work included media monitoring, writing press releases, updating the press section of the website, updating and maintaining press lists of journalists and publications, and pitching journalists about EMILY's List events and campaigns. I learned so much about what it is like to work in political communications and how fast-paced the environment is. The internship program also included "brown bag lunches" with EMILY's List staff, where interns were given the opportunity to learn about different roles in politics and some of the staff's backgrounds. This introduced me to areas of politics I had never thought about and provided me with mentors who gave me career advice and answered any questions I had.

This internship expanded upon the knowledge I have learned in my political science classes because I was able to see how the theories and studies we discuss in class play out in the real world. The internship helped to reinforce the ideas we learn in class, like how much the media affects public perception and the strong and important influence minority groups can have on politics and elections with mobilization. It was amazing to see the democratic process play out in the real world and to be able to be a part of affecting the change that is important to me personally.