

This past summer I interned at the BU African Studies Library. Since I graduated in May, this experience helped me transition into post-grad life and prepared me for my job search. After eight weeks, I felt confident that I wanted to begin a library career and attend graduate school for library science.

My supervisors, Beth Restrick and Rachel Dwyer organized a program where I would shadow someone from a different department within BU libraries every week. These sessions would be two to four hours, and my mentor would show me their daily tasks and tell me about their path to library work. This aspect of the internship was helpful because it helped me narrow down what aspects of library work interested me. Everyone provided me with advice on applying to and choosing graduate schools.

I spent the rest of my time working on a collection that Dr. Diana Wylie, a history professor who recently retired from BU, donated to the African Studies Library. My job was to create an inventory of the materials, sort them by theme, and interview Dr. Wylie for context and oral history. This was my favorite part of the internship because my supervisors took a hands-off approach, allowing me to learn from my mistakes and build a project I was proud of.

My other favorite part of the internship was getting to know the staff at the African Studies Library. Everyone was caring and extremely passionate about their work. I miss going to the library every morning and catching up with everyone.

This experience was so positive that any areas of improvement are nit-picking. I found that it was difficult to focus on any informational interview that was scheduled to last more than two hours. I think they could have been scheduled for less time or my mentors could have given me hands-on work to do. This was something we resolved after a few weeks in the internship, though.

To conclude, the BU Center of Humanities Summer Internship was an incredible experience which helped me develop my passion for library work and feel more confident about my career path. I would recommend this program to my friends.