

Summer Intern Outgoing Letter

Dear Soil and Water Conservation Society,

Calling our time together during the Summer of 2020, “weird” would be a disservice to how spectacularly bizarre the last three months have been. For in that time from May 4, 2020 to July 31, 2020, we’ve seen: America take on a global pandemic that has impacted nearly every aspect of our day-to-day lives, a social uprising of justice in the form of the Black Lives Matter movement, Des Moines recording the worst air quality index in America on July 5, and the unbelievable success of the first SWCS *virtual* conference! All of that, I got to experience with seven extremely intelligent, charismatic, and motivated SWCS staff that taught me so much about conservation and succeeding in professional endeavors. When I graduate from the University of Iowa in December 2020 with my major in Journalism & Mass Communication and my Certificate in Creative Writing, I’ll be able to take the knowledge and experience that I learned here and implement it into whatever career I find myself in.

After hearing the tasks SWCS wanted me to do for them, they let me go in any direction I like. I got the freedom to create documents in the ways I envisioned them while still getting help from staff when I needed it.

While I only got to work remotely, I still accomplished the following products:

- ✓ Created the “Soil and Water Conservation Society” and “Association of Retired Conservation Service Employees” **Partnership Plan**. This plan required me to talk with staff members of both organizations to get an idea of what they wanted to get out of this partnership. After discussions with them, I researched organizations that had success with their partnerships and picked out what ARCSE and SWCS could imitate.
- ✓ Presented the ARCSE and SWCS Partnership Plan to SWCS staff, the ARCSE board, and at the SWCS conference to ARCSE members.
- ✓ Created a **Communication Plan for ARCSE**. This is a step by step instruction guide to create their own Facebook page. This guide also lays out some social media strategies on what to include in posts and how often posts should be published.
- ✓ Created a **Communication Plan for SWCS** that covered critiques of the current social media and offered new ideas to implement in the near future. This process required a meeting with **Joe Otto** and **Jody Thompson** to gain an understanding of what the vision they had for SWCS social media pages. After that constructive conversation, I looked at similar nonprofit websites, social media pages, and newsletters. With all that information gathered, I used my knowledge from my classes to create realistic goals and strategies for SWCS to use for their social media platforms.
- ✓ Assisted with the first ever **SWCS virtual conference**. **Courtney Allen** gave me conference tasks about once a week. These miscellaneous tasks were assigned to me to get done in a timely manner without sacrificing the quality of the work. These tasks ranged from data entry, PowerPoint presentations, calling speakers for event related confirmations, etc.

Although I couldn’t be in the office every day, I think the remote internship experience still proved itself as a viable means of learning nonprofit and professional business setting skills. This internship has been unlike any professional experience that I’ve ever had. Learning from the SWCS staff has been the single most influential aspect of my professional career development thus far. I made it a point in my ARCSE and SWCS Partnership Plan presentation to urge both organizations to continue to do everything possible to continue this internship experience for future students to enjoy the benefits of learning in this one of a kind environment.



Thanks so much! Joe Derry