

Kahli Connolly

AFE Vic & Margaret Ball Scholarship

North Creek Nurseries Internship

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Student Final Report

My internship at North Creek Nurseries this summer was by far my most valuable career experience yet. I really appreciate the opportunity that the AFE provided for me. The best part of the internship, for me, was being able to rotate throughout the many positions in the company and then to also have the flexibility to spend more time on what I wanted to. All of the staff that I worked with were wonderful and showed me what successful teamwork was like. The whole experience was very enjoyable from the housing to working at the nursery.

My internship was based in the production department so I was first rotated through those positions by shadowing the production managers. I learned about creating production plans with PowerPivot and SBI computer programs, cutting production, seeding processes, buying inventory, counting inventory, and other general things about the production/inventory management. After I had a sense of the production management I moved onto the labor aspect of it. I worked taking care of all stages of the plants from using a seed machine, to planting on the line, to trimming. There were also a few days dedicated to teaching the other intern, Sarah, and I on how to properly water a greenhouse with a watering wand and then with a boom system. We also spent a whole week at their shipping facility which was such an interesting and different experience. I enjoyed working with that staff and seeing where all of the plants were going. Throughout my time at the main facility I also learned about, and took care of, the stock plants which are a vital part of the company. Other parts of the company that I was able to experience were the customer relations, sales, IPM (integrated pest management), research and development department, and upper management. I was especially interested in the research and development department so I

got to spend more time with them and it taught me a lot about the gardening industry and potential future jobs.

The internship opened up many opportunities for me with all of the skills I gained. I learned the specific skills related to each position I was rotated through, but I also learned broader skills like maintaining an efficient work flow and teamwork skills. Everyone in the company was excited to teach the interns all about their jobs and appreciated how involved we were. The COO & General Manager, Tim McGinty, was always excited to have us around. He let us develop our own projects and give input on any issues we thought of while we were there. The interns and all of the staff at North Creek are always encouraged to think of ways to improve anything and everything at the company. I enjoyed this type of environment because everyone was teaching and learning from one another. This also made it quite different from my last job at a small garden center because they preferred to use more traditional methods for everything. I think working at North Creek was the perfect way to fill my internship requirement for my BS degree in Environmental Horticulture at the University of Maine. There were many instances where I got to directly apply what I had learned in my Nursery Management, Greenhouse Management, Propagation, and Identification classes, to what I was working on. I'm really glad that I could apply my knowledge while gaining more and learn about the multitude of career options I have. Once I finish my degree, the options I would like to pursue are either working at a wholesale nursery like North Creek, or at a plant breeding facility, or intern at a public or private garden. Overall it was a wonderful life experience and I feel prepared to move on to the next stage of my career path.

Pictures

Using a Boom watering system with a grower ↓







↑ NCN 2017 production staff + summer interns



← NCN 2017 Summer Interns



Advisor



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