Mosmiller Intern Scholarship Student Report

At

Shirley’s Flowers & Gifts, Inc.

Supervised By:
Jo Buttram AAF, AMF
President/Owner
Shirley’s Flowers & Gifts, Inc.

Submitted By:
Loren Anthony
University of Arkansas
Horticulture Undergraduate
Introduction:

The opportunity to work inside of a floral shop for the summer opened my eyes to the innovations of a florist to be able to continue pushing their boundaries and creating new and unique pieces that meet the specialization that a customer wants. The experience taught me more about the ins and outs of a flower shop than I could possibly imagine learning inside of a classroom and I am thankful that I was able to learn from a shop that truly treats everyone as a family.

Work Experience:

When I began talking to Jo about what type of work I wanted to perform inside of the shop I explained to her that I wanted to have an in depth understanding of how each aspect of the store functions. I felt as though if I was to start a flower shop of my own and I only knew how to do floral arrangements that would only get me so far. It was with this idea that Jo and I broke up my internship into four different departments; marketing and sales, Walmart vendor, financing and design.

As I started working in the marketing and sales department I realized that a lot of the stores functions were handled through this department. There was never a calm moment for the workers, either they were handling sales from Teleflora, FTD, 1-800-Flowers, customers placing orders over the phone or in person. All while handling these orders they would constantly have to think about different supplies that needed to be in the store to make that order. This included things such as what flowers we had available that day, the costs of each of the different indoor house plants, and if we had the materials such as the vases or certain shapes of oasis foam available in our store. Each order would have its own personal list of materials that had to be kept in mind and it was a unique balancing act to make sure that everything would supplied for the requested order. Without the workers ensuring everything was available for an order, this could lead to the designers having difficulty with the order and cause the flow of orders to become backed up.

After several weeks inside of the marketing and sales department I was asked to begin working with the department for being a Walmart Vendor. I learned during this time that we had three different workers at the store that would split up the Walmart Neighborhood Markets in the area and go to each of these stores and check the quality of the flowers. We would go through and cut the stems of the flowers, petal roses to ensure they were presentable and we would also check the water in each of the containers to ensure that the flowers were in as healthy of an environment as
possible. If there were any flowers that were not up to our shops standards then we would have them removed and used as a credit for Walmart.

Following the experience inside the Walmart Department I spent three weeks inside of financing. Personally, I found this to be the difficult part of the internship because of all of the different steps that had to be handled throughout the day. I also had this fear that if I did anything wrong that it would lead to financial losses in the store, but luckily nothing like that happened! The daily steps that had to be completed inside of the store included closing out sales in RTI, scanning and processing Walmart credits and invoices, paying bills, documenting checks and house payments made by customers, checking time sheets for workers and also sending monthly bills to customers. Each of these steps were explained to me in depth and it helped me understand what purpose there was for performing different steps inside of programs such as quickbooks.

To end my internship at Shirley’s I spent the rest of my internship inside of the design department. Many of our daily designs could be broken down into two sections including designers choice designs and recipes for the sales made through FTD, 1-800-Flowers and Teleflora. I was also taught about how different the funeral pieces can be for each person. There were funerals where the customers would only request vase arrangements because they wanted
family members to be able to take the flowers home while others would want all the sprays at the funeral to be similar in color choice. Finally, I was also taught about the importance of wedding details. At Shirley’s the main focus is to ensure that every customer is happy with their order. With this being said, we would make every effort we could to help show bride during their consultation what type of arrangements we are planning for them with their budget in mind by creating the designs at the store for them during the consultations. Along with this we would ask the brides to come into the store the day before the wedding to double check over everything that was designed for them. It is during this time that if something is designed wrong we still have time to make adjustments to ensure everything is perfect for their day.

Conclusion:

During my time at Shirley’s Flowers & Gifts, Inc. there was always something new being taught to me. I had classes at the University of Arkansas that provided me chances to learn about working in a flower shop. However, there is only so much that can be taught inside of the classroom. I feel as though with this opportunity I will be able to continue practicing floral design and learn from the florists at the shop to become a master florist and hopefully one day be able to teach others.