For my internship I worked for Tagawa Greenhouse Enterprise in Brighton, Colorado. It was very different from other internships because I was put in all of the departments of the company. I worked in seeding, sticking, production, distribution, the Costco and Home Depot teams, the garden center, and administration over the six month internship. In seeding I put trays through the seeding machines and worked on getting through daily quotas. For sticking I was in the golden facility and I cleaned up propagated geraniums and then I stuck propagation materials on a line. Production was the longest of the rotations I was in. I was an irrigator so most of my responsibilities was looking over the plants and watering the sections of the houses I managed. Distribution was a day of loading carts of plants onto trucks to go to their destination stores. Costco and Home Depot was setting up the delivered carts in the stores and setting everything up. Home Depot was different in that there wasn’t a dedicated space for just our plants so they needed to be set on tables wherever we had the space. The rotation at Tagawa Gardens was my favorite rotation because I got the opportunity to help customers with my plant knowledge. There I kept the plants looking nice with deadheading and organizing them. Administration gave me more background on why certain things were done in the rotations, like how plant space was used in production or how the products sold were chosen. I am very glad I got to work in such a great company in this industry. They provided a great experience and were very accommodating and welcoming to me.

I've learned a lot of skills from this experience. During my internship I was able to become more proficient in identifying common bedding plants and their different cultivars. I had more knowledge of native wild plants from my classes than greenhouse ones. In terms of language skills, I've learned how to communicate at least somewhat with people who only speak Spanish. It was kind of alienating to be the only person, most of the time, who spoke English at all which is what they experience every day living in the US with their native Spanish. So I tried to learn more intermediate Spanish to bridge the gap. I didn't get very good at Spanish but I also used
translation apps to make sure that I was saying the right thing. I feel like being in that position helped me relate to them and gave me perspective on the people who make up a lot of the greenhouse workforce.

My education has benefited greatly from this internship. My education helped a lot in me knowing the basics of what needs to be done, but more of it was in an academic setting and not what it'd be like in a workplace. So now I have two important areas of reference for my learning.

This had a big effect on my choices on what I want to do in the future. I was in many parts of the company and got a lot of perspective on what I wanted to do. I think that my plan of working in a greenhouse has come apart somewhat. I was very uncomfortable at times knowing that if I did something wrong I would be throwing money in the garbage and it was soured for me. I feel more like I should pursue my interest in working in tissue culture research, gardens centers, or botanical gardens rather than look for commercial growers to work for. All in all, I hope I can use what I have experienced to be able to something I find fulfilling and successful.