

Dear Mosmiller Intern Scholarship Committee,

Through the Mosmiller Internship Program, I have had the opportunity to gain experience in both a retail floral shop setting and a wedding/special event environment at Tiger Garden, a student operated floral program on the University of Missouri's campus. This experience exceeded my expectations in a multitude of ways, but most importantly, it gave me the ability to learn new techniques and skills in an encouraging learning environment. Since changing the entire direction of my professional career, I have dreamed of becoming a wedding florist, but I had never had the opportunity to work from start to finish with a bride to make her special day come to life through flowers. Tiger Garden allowed me to experiment with design styles and techniques, and even taught me how to conduct consultations with bridal parties! I went from having very little special event design experience, to confidently conducting consultations and creating inspiration boards to bring ideas to life.

The greatest moment of my internship was creating my first bouquet that a bride would have on her wedding day. I have made bouquets in the floral design classroom before but making a bouquet for a real-life bride was an incredibly exhilarating experience! My supervisors were with me every step of the way, helping me with techniques, and even taught me some tricks. I learned how to create centerpieces, arbors, bouquets, boutonnieres, corsages, flower crowns, animal collars, aisle markers, cake flowers and so much more! Like many in the floral industry, COVID-19 wreaked havoc on Tiger Gardens wedding schedule for most of the summer. I thought this would be a major setback in my internship, but fortunately, we maintained a few small wedding ceremonies. This pandemic gave me the opportunity to see how the floral industry can be impacted by situations beyond anyone's control, and I got to see firsthand how

Tiger Garden handled contractual agreements and rescheduling, which gave me ideas of how I can handle similar circumstances for my own business.

I started my junior year of college thinking I was meant to be an agricultural educator. I thought I was meant to teach in a classroom, but after stepping foot in the floral design classroom at Mizzou, everything changed for me. I fell in love with the freedom and creativity that floral design brought to my life. When I started my internship at Tiger Garden, I was torn between whether I wanted to become a retail florist and operate my own shop or become a wedding and special event florist. After completing my internship at Tiger Garden, I can say without a doubt that I want a career in the wedding industry.

After graduation in December, I plan to begin operating as a special event florist specializing in wedding florals. Excitingly enough, my husband and I are expecting our first child in March of 2020, so I cannot wait to begin the next chapter in my life and career. Without this internship program, I can confidently say that I would not have had the opportunity to explore the floral industry in the depth at which I have, and I most likely wouldn't have discovered how deeply I love wedding floral design. I cannot say thank you enough for the experience this has given me, and for the professional relationship I have built with Tiger Garden through my internship there.

Sincerely,

Katelyn Reiss

