

Mosmiller Intern Scholarship Student Report

My name is Gabriella Garcia and I performed my 13 week internship at Jacksonville Flower Market with Shelly Hagan. While receiving my education at Texas State University has taught me a multitude of information regarding horticulture, this hands on internship put me in a position to really understand how floral businesses run. During this experience, I sharpened my intrapersonal skills, floral design creativity, and an understanding of operations. This opportunity paved way in terms of how I see my future and what I expect of myself from this point forward.

Wildly enough, I began my internship the week of Mother's Day; one of busiest days in floral shop. Immediately I was placed in a fast pace atmosphere where I was able to quickly absorb the essential skills needed to deliver excellent service and beautiful flowers to demanding customers. Engaging with customers and helping them be creative with their own vision is the best part of the connection that sings in a floral shop. Wrapping their design together with grace so that they become overzealous with the anticipation of gifting something beautiful to someone they care about comes second best in this business.

After the first month or two of working in retail, I was finally eased into learning how to design floral arrangements. Shelly and her team were nothing but encouraging throughout the entire process. Each florist had their own tips and tricks which is hard not to admire. Once I learned the basics I was able to start making designs that could be sent out to customers to purchase which felt even more rewarding. I do admit that one of the cons of being florist is making the same 'Top Seller' repeatedly in different sizes for hours on end. I try to remind myself in this stationary moment that I'm sending off an arrangement that will make someone's day and the redundancy does not take away from the beauty in each design.

At Jacksonville Flower Market, there is a massive operation that includes wholesale and retail open to the public to purchase individual stems and arrangements. We also receive online orders from our website as well as through 1-800-Flowers. That being said, I personally do not think I'd want to run such a large operation. Intimacy is really important to me, so I would like to have a smaller shop with a more contemporary approach. Here we mostly create traditional arrangements and I quickly learned that I like more abstract and unique floral designs.

Overall, this experience has taught me how to build relationships with customers, how to tap into my creativity, and how I can start from scratch to open a business of my own in the near future. I loved being able to walk into to work and smell sweet lilies every morning, and I will miss getting shipments every week of exotic flowers for our weddings. And lastly I could not be any more appreciative of the clarity this opportunity has given me in regards to my future plans of opening up my own floral shop.