

Clemson Horticulture *Student Essay*

Internship Experience at Augusta National Golf Club

by Chris Smith

History

I am a Horticulture major at Clemson University finishing out my senior year. For the Horticulture major an internship is required to graduate. Previous to this internship, I worked for a landscape maintenance company in Pelion, South Carolina. When looking for an internship, I was nervous to go into the interviews without knowing the person interviewing me. My previous employer went to the same church as me so I knew him before I worked with him but for this internship it was different. I set up a few interviews with various businesses with different job descriptions within my field of study. I have never had an Interview with a future employer before so I did not know what to expect. I was heading into my first interview with one company and was informed that the employer had to cancel on my interview. So needless to say, I felt helpless without any practice when going to interview with The Augusta National Golf Club. When I got into the interview they embraced me as part of their family and they were extremely kind. Right then I knew I wanted to be a part of that organization. A few weeks later they asked me if I wanted to intern in their nursery department and I said YES.



Work Agreement

During this internship I agreed with Anna Lacey, a manager over interns at Augusta National, to a rotation of duties. The duties were to create an experiment and obtain results if any; to fertilize, mow grass, plant trees and other plants, maintain the health of trees, hand prune, hedge, trim, water, lay and cut sod, work on irrigation, apply pesticides, and spend some time with the golf course department. The actual work did reflect my agreement. The work might have been different by the amount of time spent on certain duties. For example, during the summer internship I spent much of my time watering. The weather was not very favorable for rain this summer so water was needed for the less established and drought intolerant plants. I also did not expect to have to prune so many azaleas by hand but there were a lot of them to do.

Challenging Experience

My most challenging experience while working for the golf club concerned watering. I had to water often out on the golf course and it became quite boring at some moments. But then I started to think that what I was doing was for the plants and realized that it was the best thing for them to survive and it made the job worthwhile just knowing that simple fact.

Needed Character Traits

For an internship at The Augusta National Golf Club there are some characteristics one needs to have. They include being honest, hardworking, trustworthy, reliable, must be polite, ability to work well in groups, have good social skills and having a respectful attitude towards everyone.

Classroom Connections

Many connections were made between many work experiences and my classroom experiences. In Horticulture 101 we

learned about how to plant a plant properly in the soil and in my work experience we practiced that very frequently. My HORT 303 class in Landscape Plants taught me how to recognize different landscape plants and that proved helpful this summer. My Horticulture 210/211 classes in Growing Plants taught me how to water and take care of plants in a greenhouse and in my internship I was instructed and trusted to go into the greenhouse and take care of some plants within it. There are many more connections that can be made but those three connections are the main ones.

Best Experience

My best experiences tremendously outweighed my worst experience. I cannot think of all the great experiences I had but here are a few. The first great experience was being able to interact with all of my co-workers in such a great way to where we became friends and hung out with each other outside of work. The other great experience I had was having such a great apartment to stay in after work. The golf club gave me a great deal on an apartment that was really close to work. On top of that, the room was fully furnished!

Favorite Person

My favorite person that worked at The Augusta National Golf Club was Frank Scribner. He is a former Clemson University graduate with a Horticulture degree and he started working for The Augusta National Golf Club in January of 2015. He is my favorite person because we hung out a lot outside of work. Besides us hanging out, he was a great worker and he is very knowledgeable about any horticulture related topic. Overall this internship was great. It turned out to be an amazing experience for me because I learned many new aspects of the job. The workers and managers there were really nice and I enjoyed working with all of them. I would definitely like to go back there and work for The Augusta National Golf Club again!