

California Energy Commission Summer 08

Describe your tasks and your internship workplace environment.

As an intern for the California Energy Commission, my tasks include attending conference calls, meetings, and hearings about environmental issues and renewable energy. Sometimes I also conduct research pertaining to renewable energy. I also worked with a few databases inputting and organizing information. I extensively used Microsoft Excel and mail merge in Microsoft Word. In addition, I compiled files, filed papers, and input information and folders into the computer.

My internship workplace is business casual unless there is a meeting or conference to attend. The whole office is made up of 4 floors of cubicles. The office works at a medium pace, so there's plenty of time to learn. The staff is very friendly and willing to speak with the interns. The other interns in the office are fun to work with. Most of the interns attend UC's and a few attend Sacramento State College. The interns here are a tight knit group. We work, laugh and hang out after work together. All these factors make this working environment especially enjoyable. I will miss it when I leave.

How has this experience made you more or less excited about a career in public or community service?

This experience has made me more excited about a career in the public sector. Working at the Energy Commission has allowed me to see how projects and initiatives begin. Most of the time initiatives begin with just a group of people who have never met face to face and who are able to get a lot of the work done through phone conferences. One really good example is the RETI initiative which is a group that is working to implement plans and programs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to meet the AB 32 goal. It is inspiring to see how everyday real people can just get together and make change in the world.

I was also able to talk to my supervisor about how he got into the state sector, the benefits of working for the state and other aspects of working for the state versus the private sector. In the end, I became really excited about a career in the state and now, I am considering pursuing a career in the state, perhaps in the environmental field. Before this internship, I had never considered working for the state but now, I am seriously considering it!

Were you able to develop particular skills and /or interest at your site?

I developed an interest in renewable energy, particularly solar energy. I am interested in learning more about how alternative energy can be used on a large scale. I have also learned so much about the issues and the problems involving solar power plants. One of the interests that I have developed is in solving the transmission problem associated with solar power plants. I am especially curious to learn how the state plans to approach this problem in order to make large scale solar power plants possible. Also, at my internship site I have acquired skills with computer programs such as Microsoft Excel and I became familiar with a few of the main databases at the commission.

Would you recommend this internship to a future scholar intern?

I would recommend this internship site to a future scholar intern. You can learn so much about renewable energy and California's involvement in this technology and development. At the Energy Commission, there are so many opportunities to attend hearings, meetings, and get a firsthand view of what California is doing to meet goals for alternative energy. There are also other interns in the office, so you will be able to make plenty of friends. Plus, all of the staff are

friendly and are willing to talk to the interns about various environmental issues. They are also willing to talk about their own college experiences and how they got into their careers, so this is a great place to get advice. It was a real eye-opening experience to hear their stories.

What were the most exciting or challenging experiences you had as a UCCS Scholar Intern?

The most challenging experience I had at the UCCS program is the internship work load. I had a full time internship, working 8 hours a day for five days a week and attending classes and doing homework on top of that. I had to work really hard in order to keep on top of both work and school. I also worked hard to make the paper deadlines. This experience has shown me what it is like to have a full time job at an office. It was challenging attending school and interning at the same time. I felt that I had no time for anything else but school and work. However, in the end, I learned so much more about time management. I learned to deal with pressure, to not panic and to take things one step. The UCCS program was a rewarding experience.