

Layla Wofsy
Carter Center Mini-Internship

In a normal, non-pandemic, year, the Carter Center runs an internship program for undergraduate and graduate students at their offices in Atlanta. However, despite most universities and businesses returning to in-person environments, their internship program has been reminded online for the fall session, in effort to maintain the health and safety of their staff and interns.

It is common for virtual internships to be painful and meaningless for interns who end up being left alone to do busy work without any interactions with other interns or staff members, however; the Carter Center made an effort to ensure their interns got the most out of the Carter Center internship program experience.

“They did everything in their power to make it as good as it could be, I would have loved to be in atlanta ... but I can't think of anything the carter center could have done to accommodate the online experience better,” said Sam Piacente, a former human resource intern during the last summer session.

The Center held various events for the interns such as a journal club where the interns and staff would get together on zoom to read an article picked by one of the interns, and all have a discussion about it. Mansi Sidana, a current data analysis intern for the Trachoma program, explained that in the journal club she felt like she was a part of a larger group because the interns were the ones selecting the paper for everyone to discuss.

Lauren Kent-Delany, Director of Educational Programs, believes that “one of the greatest strengths of the internship program is the interns getting to learn from each other,” which is something that happens with events like the journal club.

Despite the virtual environment, many of the interns would not have had the opportunity to participate if the internship had been in person in Atlanta. “It being virtual worked out perfectly for me since i was going to school at Georgetown and not in Atlanta. I would not have been able to do it if it had been in person. For me it was the ideal scenario,” explained Maddie Warman, an intern with the Conflict Resolution Program during the most recent spring and summer sessions.

Similarly, Sidana was able to live in Spain while partaking in the internship program. In addition to the internship, she has been able to take Spanish classes. “Being remote has allowed me to pick up a language in the other half of my day when I'm not doing the internship,” she said.

Andrew Nute, a Data Manager with Health programs and Sidana’s supervisor, believes that “going virtual has opened up the ability for [him] to meet with students one after the other, no matter where [each of us] are.”