LINK Project Proposal
Molly Black

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My goal for my LINK internship is to “gain an understanding of the communications that occur in a non-profit organization and work to positively impact the lives of children, through bringing compassion and creativity to the work environment.” I think that working with Heather Quandt at Sonlight Christian Camp is going to meet this goal, and I am going to learn a lot from my internship experience.

Founded in 1979, Sonlight Christian Camp is located in the mountains of Pagosa Springs, Colorado. Sonlight offers summer camp programs for kids and wilderness backpack trips for church groups. Their facility is available for church groups to rent when summer camp is not in session. “Sonlight, a great place for kids. A place to get away, face challenges, grow, learn, and develop character. Camp is where kids are in the presence of Jesus. Camp is community, accepting the challenges of working with others, and a place to play hard in a safe environment. Camp is about life, becoming more committed, asking tough questions, playing within boundaries, and growing to be better people.”

My mentor is Heather Quandt. She is the summer camp director and is in charge of everything regarding summer camp. She hires staff, plans games for the summer, fundraises, sings lots of campfire songs, and makes sure that summer camp at Sonlight is the best it can be! Heather is full of energy, great ideas and I am super excited to work with her. During my internship, I will get to see what goes into producing the Sonlight summer camp experience. I will be doing a variety of different things with Heather, all of which will relate to summer camp. I am not sure what a day-to-day schedule will look like, but I am confident that I will learn a lot from her.

Leading up to this, I was looking at interning at the Children’s Hospital in Denver. Then, at the beginning of the year, I was looking at possibly going to Uganda on a mission trip for my internship. After looking into these opportunities, I realized that I had an amazing opportunity much closer to home- in Pagosa Springs. I am very passionate about working with children and am interested in the non-profit sector. I love to be creative in my work. I am interested in studying communications in college, because it encompasses a wide variety of things that I enjoy, such as communication through design, leadership, and effectively communicating to people of all types. Working at Sonlight will help me understand the communications in the non-profit sector in a creative environment, where I can work to positively impact kids. This internship will give me insight into a possible career that relates to my interests, and will be a learning experience that will give me skills for the future.

My project will be working to put together a Sonlight camper advisory council. This council will serve as a way for Sonlight campers to bring new, creative ideas to Sonlight, to make these ideas a reality, and will let campers gain a voice in their camp. The council will help fundraise, and will do a certain number of projects each year. During my internship, I will be working to formulate a beginning for this council which may include: creating a website for it, figuring out the application process for campers, the types of projects and amount of projects the council will produce, and spreading the word about the council. While this idea is in the rough stages, I am in contact with Heather, and we are working out the logistical side of this. My goal by the end of my internship is to have a website, camper applications, the logistics and also have the council “advertised.”

I am excited for this project, because I think it will allow me to be really creative. My hope is that this project and this council will continue im the years to come, and positively impact Sonlight camp and campers in a positive way. This project is relevant to me because it allows me to work in areas where I am comfortable like web design and leadership, but it will also challenge me to step out of my comfort zone and create a council, which I have never done before. This project is relevant to Sonlight because it is involving campers year round, to improve camp based on camper ideas.

For this internship, the Habits of Heart and Mind I see myself needing most are perspective, advocacy and refinement. I think I will need perspective in order to be open to learning new things and create a project that appeals to different audiences. I know I will need advocacy for my internship, because that will help me to be able to learn more from my mentor. I think I will need refinement so I can create my project to the best of my ability.

Heather and I are going to be working together to create a schedule, since I won’t be at Sonlight the entire three weeks. I will probably stay at camp for a few days, and then come home for a few days. Until we have a schedule, I won’t know where I will be and what will be attainable goals for my project. As far as project materials, I can’t think of anything I will need other than my computer.

Problem solving is a very important skill to have during an internship, because it will lead to an overall better and more enriching time. One challenge that I have overcome during this internship process is trying to decide what to do. Since my ideas were all over the place, and I had so many things in mind, it was hard to figure out where to start. Through all of it, I kept an open mind, and this led to more possibilities to explore. I will carry this idea of an open mind into my internship and into this new experience.

I am really looking forward to my internship, and hope that it will be a huge learning opportunity for me, and that my project will impact Sonlight and its campers for years to come.