ANKURI: THE AGENCY FOR NON-KONVENTIONAL URBAN RENEWAL INITIATIVES

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Class of 2020
An ANKURI Intern

- ANKURI interns can focus on many areas within the Agency such as teaching, social media, fashion, or documentation. I focused on teaching and documentation.

- Monday through Friday, I taught four English classes to children ages 5 to 12. Each of my four classes were at different schools. At two of the schools, I co-taught my classes, and at the other two, I taught alone. After classes, I would lesson plan for the following day – or week if I was feeling ambitious!

- In the afternoons, I also worked on documentation for our program director. Currently our program director is trying to build her own school. I helped create concept notes detailing budgets, potential curriculums, potential learning styles, and the goals of the new school. I also created a document that compiled the successful lesson plans from this past summer. I organized the document according to age and school – detailing the base knowledge of English of grade at each school as well as the effective lesson plans.

- I also, along with me fellow interns, held afternoon games for one of the schools. Monday through Thursday we would go the yard at the school and play games with the children for about two hours, which was a great experience because we were able to interact with the children in a different way at games than we were in the classroom.
Students from my 6 to 8 year old class

Students from my 5 and 6 year old class
Challenges and Obstacles

- Teaching children a foreign language is a rewarding but very taxing experience, for both the student and the teacher. Some days the kids just did not want to learn, and they would become very rowdy and make it impossible to hold their attention. There were days, though, that made the rowdy days worth it. One such day was when one of my twelve-year-old students brought in a drawing for me. It was a drawing of the Hindu goddess Saraswati, and she had written such a sweet letter on the back of the drawing – in English! The drawing meant something because Saraswati is the goddess of learning, and my student wrote in her letter that she enjoyed class and enjoyed learning English. Her drawing and her letter really helped me push through what had been a taxing week – moments like that are really what made this internship so special!
After School Selfies!

I can honestly say that I have never met children more excited to be photographed. If they saw that I had my phone out, they immediately would ask to take selfies, and if they saw me with my camera, they would start posing and asking for me to take their pictures. After school games definitely turned into a photo shoot at times.
Work Environment

- The ANKURI work environment is very calm and comfortable. Rachna, the program director, is very open to any ideas for projects that any interns might have. If the project will benefit the program, then Rachna will be interested. She asks that the interns stay on her property at her homestay called Thikana at Bharatwala. All of our lesson planning and project work took place at the homestay which was a very peaceful environment.

- The school environment was very different from that of Rachna’s homestay, but that is to be expected. The children were always loud and excited whenever we came to teach our classes. Their excitement always made for a great environment, though, because their excitement to see us and listen to us usually made them more attentive in class.
My Internship and My Future Academic Plans

- Working with the ANKURI program allowed me to be surrounded by Indian culture which solidified my desire to pursue a certificate in South Asian Studies. I also learned through this internship that I do not want to teach in an academic setting, but I do enjoy working with children. My time spent with the children made me think more about Psychology as a potential major because I enjoyed learning about the children’s backgrounds and how those backgrounds affected their behavior in class.

- This internship also helped me to consider more career paths such as jobs in communications, marketing, or human relations which were paths that I had not previously considered. I also think that, given the chance, I would love to work for a non-profit organization such as ANKURI.
Working with the ANKURI program was an eye-opening cultural and learning experience in the best way possible. Through this internship, I learned so much about myself – from academic interests to limitations. I am thankful that I was given the opportunity to participate in this internship and work for such an incredible organization.