

This summer, I had the wonderful experience of completing an internship in the Washington, D.C. metro area at Kensington Park Retirement Community. Kensington Park has Independent Living, Skilled Nursing, and Memory Care Communities which are all located on the same beautiful landscaped property and cater to the needs of a variety of residents.

Through professor Melanie Eaton, I was put in contact with Tanya Walker, Managing Director of Kensington Park. Mrs. Eaton provided guidance on entering the field of long term care and served as a mentor and reference as I began my time with Kensington Park. There were two interns chosen from WKU, and both of us spent eight weeks rotating through the administrative departments of the community.

As part of the internship, we were housed on-site in a two bedroom apartment in the independent living community. This gave us a unique perspective, as we both lived and worked with the residents on a day to day basis. Spending time with the residents in my off times was one of the highlights of my summer. Additionally, they provided us with meals from the exceptional dining services at Kensington Park and provided us with a stipend. It truly was a rare and generous arrangement for an internship.

During my time at Kensington Park I rotated through several departments, learning the administrative aspects of each one of them. I began in marketing, where I was introduced to the process of advertising the community and presenting it to prospective residents. Marketing is the threshold for potential residents and so it is heavily tied in to operations to provide a solid foundation for follow through after sale. As I worked in marketing, I developed skills in community relations, organization of contacts and outreach programs, and the interpersonal communication skills that are necessary to build relationships with potential residents.

A bulk of my time was spent in the business office and it was here that I feel that I learned the most. I was charged with some tasks that pertained to expense control and overtime monitoring. This particular set of tasks was in response to some budget control issues that were taking place, and so it was a good time to learn some of the skills that would be necessary in a critical time. I gained experience in finance and budgeting and was responsible for the compilation and creation of overtime and expense reports. The information contained in these reports was gathered from the database and was used in meetings with department heads. I got hands-on experience with computer programs, business communication, and was given some applicable guidance on how the finances of a company contribute to its overall success. My biggest take away from the business office was that there must be a sufficient margin to allow for the success of the mission.

I also rotated through Dining, Activities, Maintenance, Concierge, and Nursing. I gained exposure to how all of these things come together to make a home for the

residents, to provide for medical and care needs, and to execute the patient centered care model. I feel as if I began my experience with long term care in one of the best communities in the industry and I am grateful for the opportunity that WKU and Kensington Park gave to me through that.