

## [Interning at the Library](#)



Sylvia Beaver, Bloomington High School North student and Library intern

“Despite the challenges presented to all of us in 2020 and beyond, we were excited to find a way to partner again

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with Bloomington High School North's internship program. While our opportunities for internships during the pandemic were greatly limited, we created a safe pathway for an internship to take place during this extraordinary time. Our values and goals support experiential learning, with a focus on lifelong learning, inclusiveness, and developing essential life skills. Here at our Library, internships aim to provide valuable career experience, teach important workplace habits, introduce students to new contacts and social connections, and hope their time spent with us is fun and fulfilling. The mutually beneficial support each internship provides to the Library and our constituents is invaluable. Some internships at the Library have brought us talented staff that are now a part of our current team. We look forward to more opportunities like this to connect with tomorrow's leaders and our community partners in deep and meaningful ways."

—Lorraine Martin, MCPL Administrative and Volunteer Coordinator

"The Bloomington North Internship Program is designed to help students learn more about professions of their interest and get hands-on experience with businesses and nonprofits in our community. Our students intern 1–3 times per week at their site and get to see the day-in and day-out activities at their placement. We are so grateful for all the businesses and nonprofits that host our students because it gives our students invaluable real-world experience that we otherwise could not provide. The Monroe County Public Library has hosted a variety of students over the years and given them beneficial and enjoyable experiences that have helped our students make life long career decisions."

—Brian Muehlhaus, Director, Bloomington High School North Service Learning Program/Senior Project

My name is Sylvia Beaver and I am a senior at Bloomington High School North partaking in the senior internship class. While I have volunteered all over Bloomington, this has been my first internship of any kind. Senior internships allow students to be able to get real field experience from an area of their choice. I chose to intern at the Monroe County Public Library (MCPL) because I enjoy learning new things and working with the public and want to go into a career where I can feel like I am helping the members of my community.

I've been interning at the library since October, and in the few months I've been here I have learned a lot about the background mechanisms that make the Library function. One of the most notable places in the Library that I have worked in has been the bookstore, which is run by a nonprofit organization supporting MCPL called Friends of the Library. In the bookstore, I have cashiered, sorted donations, and helped disassemble items that can be recycled. I've also really enjoyed learning about the teen center, The Ground Floor, which provides engaging materials and programs geared towards Bloomington's youth. However, the most notable thing about the Library has been how kind the staff are and how deeply they care about their work. I love meeting new people so being able to interact with library professionals everyday has been really fun.

Since the pandemic, the Library has had to shift almost every program to be contactless. This has undoubtedly been a huge change from the programs that the Library used to offer, but there has still been strong community participation in these new versions of programs, and it has been very exciting to watch these programs take off, such as teen programming with Discord, or Library Tinder. The teen Discord server has been able to provide teens who used to actively visit The Ground Floor with a new virtual space to communicate and play games with each other. Library Tinder is a new program that is gauged towards adults and has seen great success by filling up almost immediately with patrons requesting to be matched with a book.

I would strongly recommend to North students that they try the senior internship program during their senior year because it has something for everyone. MCPL has been a great fit for me and has taught me an immense amount about the behind-the-scenes that I would have never thought a library had, such as all of the care that goes into fundraising through the Friends of the Library, advertising, and putting up displays for patrons. I'm extremely grateful to have had this experience in the Library and I am looking forward to the next few months of interning here.

For more information about volunteering or completing an internship with us, please contact Administrative and



Volunteer Coordinator, Loraine Martin at [lmartin \[at\] mcpl.info](mailto:lmartin@mcpl.info) or 812-349-3060.

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