



Glen S. Goldberg Scholarship Winner Angela Wesley Shares her Internship

DAILY JOURNAL

Friday, January 3, 2014

Today was my first day at RLE Charleston! I was practically thrown right into the busy daily life of Missie and Stacey, which was exactly what I wanted. Missie did a great job of allowing me to shadow her today and I learned a lot just in six hours. When I arrived, we waited about fifteen minutes for a new business client to come for her first meeting to discuss her wedding taking place this November. I sat in on the meeting and it was really great because the clients were excited to have an intern sit in on the process and even asked my opinion on a few things.

After the meeting, Missie started me on a photo project using Flickr. I have never used this online photo program before, but I was told that this will become one of my biggest projects this semester so I was glad to be introduced to it. Stacey was out of the office most of the day on site with a few different clients. While Missie was busy, I even answered the phone! After I was working with the photos for a little bit, the rest of the day consisted of shadowing Missie and helping her with her tasks for the day. I listened to one of her phone conversations, which was a potential new business consultation, outlining all of the services that RLE offers. While she was speaking with the client, I followed along on the packet that she had given me upon arrival. I was happy to hear the explanations because some of the things on the services outline weren't services that I was familiar with. For the rest of the day, I watched Missie work through her emails and she introduced me to the online program that RLE uses for room diagrams. It is such an efficient program and it will definitely be something that I use in the future. Around 2:00 pm Stacey and Dara came back to the office. Stacey was pretty stressed out so we didn't chat much.

I learned so much in just the first day at RLE Charleston. I realized how stressful their daily lives can be in the office, but this is just what I was looking forward to. I have found that I work best under pressure, so this seems to be the type of career that I am looking for. Within the last half hour that I was in the office, Missie explained a lot of things that I should keep in mind for event days, as well as a lot of things about this position in general. It was a kind of a short and sweet explanation of what to expect. I am looking forward to more of what there is for me to see at RLE! Tomorrow is the first wedding and it is supposed to be very large with 380 guests and 26 individuals in the wedding party. This is definitely going to be another day where I am thrown into the chaos, and I am excited for it.

DAILY JOURNAL

Saturday, January 4, 2014

Today's wedding took place at the Legare Waring House and I arrived at 9:30 am to help set up. I met the other intern, Allie, as well as one girl who typically helps on event days and took direction from Dara who is an Event Design and Production director for RLE. It was really

important to pay attention to the diagram and timeline to be sure everything was done on time. Some of the vendors weren't on time and there was typical event chaos, but we got everything done in a timely manner. When the day changed so much for me was when Stacey asked me to come inside and work alongside her and the bridal party. Since I knew close to nothing about this event coming into it, it was difficult to know where things were that Stacey asked me to get and how to answer some of the bridal party's questions.

The day continued on in the afternoon very quickly as we had to get the men and women ready for photos and get them to the church on time. I was put in charge of getting them on the trolley and to the church on time because Stacey had to leave and get to the church early. Again, this was pretty stressful. Stacey and the other girls are really good about using their phones on event days it seems, so I hope this continues. Communication is so important in order for things to go smoothly. It is also important to remain calm, and speak and look as though everything is going the way it is supposed to. This was hard at times, but it did come easier than expected. Just as yesterday, I learned a lot during the event day about event etiquette and much more. I was happy to be a part of this and be able to ask questions throughout in order to become a better intern practically before I even started.

DAILY JOURNAL

Friday, January 10, 2014

Today I was given the responsibility of holding down the fort when Missie and Stacey had to go to a meeting in the morning. Today was also a great day because I solved a problem for them! It was just a minor project at first, looking up fabric samples and trying to find the best ones with some guidelines according to the scheme of the event. The event is a large part of the annual Food and Wine Festival that Charleston has, and we have been struggling to find the right fabric to make into napkins. Today I was scoping about trying to find the best match. Long story short, I was able to make a few phone calls and give a few backup options to what Missie originally wanted and the problem of our first choice fabric on back order no longer was a problem!

I did not get to finish a few of my projects by the end of the day, but in my opinion sometimes that is better, when there is no immediate deadline of course. The projects that I did not complete yet are pricing out different items for the welcome bags that we give to clients. The other part of this project is to come up with a new format for their welcome packet that is given to new brides and grooms. There is different information included like how to use Pinterest, Dropbox and how to show us what their overall vision looks like so far for their big day. I am looking forward to creating this new template because yet again, it feels great to be such a big part of this company even just as an intern.

Lastly, I had to pick up a marriage license a few blocks away from the office, so I was able to walk down beautiful King Street and see a bit more of the city that I haven't seen yet. I am glad that they will be sending me out to complete tasks like this on the "scenic route" because they know how important it is for me to see the city as it is to complete this internship and get the most out of it. Experiencing a new culture and seeing new things keeps life fresh and new and I think it will keep my mind free of stressors more often when I am working at the internship. It was nice to leave the office and walk for about a half an hour because the city is just so beautiful and it was a breath of fresh air.

DAILY JOURNAL

Friday, January 17, 2014

Today was a very long day, to say the least. I experienced my first rehearsal, rehearsal dinner and welcome reception. The rehearsal was important for me to tag along with so that I could see the venue for the wedding, but also so that I know the typical timeline for a rehearsal. It was hard to keep everyone focused because it was very cold outside. Although the venue is beautiful because it is located on the water, the wind in January makes it for a very nippy atmosphere. We are going to have heat lamps for the guests tomorrow. They also have a very nontraditional set up for the bridal party because they have 12 groomsmen and 8 bridesmaids. This was something definitely worth practicing because none of them were familiar with this before. It was difficult for Stacey because she doesn't work with this number very often either, so it was good to see her logistical work.

A welcome reception is something that is becoming much more popular for weddings in Charleston. The bride and groom want to entertain the guests for the entire weekend instead of just at the wedding since many of them are flying in and travelling long distances to be at the wedding. The welcome reception typically takes place after the rehearsal dinner, the night before the wedding. Everyone is invited to join and they can do it in a variety of ways. This particular bride and groom went crazy with the details. They rented out the American Theater, had marquee posters made, cut a cake, ordered passed hors d'oeuvres and an open bar. Their entertainment was actually the most famous band in Charleston, and they were great! The guests had such a good time that they didn't leave when they were supposed to. This was especially frustrating for us because we knew we had a long day tomorrow, but also because we had lots to clean up after the last guest left. It was a new experience to learn about this event, but it was just as much work as a wedding itself.

Stacey left after the party was underway, and left Dara and I to wrap up the event and be sure everything goes smoothly. We were working with the girls of Patrick Properties who own the American Theater and other venues, including the wedding site, and oversee the events, work the catering and are sure that everything about the venue is going off without a hitch. They are really great and are supposedly the best to work with to be sure that everything is taken care of professionally and to the highest quality. With this being their reputation, I was not disappointed. The way Missie described them to me before I left this morning, I was setting them to a high standard and they really did great.

DAILY JOURNAL

Saturday, January 18, 2014

Just as I suspected, this was a very long day as well. The event seemed to be faster paced than the last wedding, and I think it was because the ceremony and reception were on the same location so we didn't have time to regroup at any point. Time going by faster has its benefits and its drawbacks. As I mentioned, when we needed a breather, that wasn't an option, but it also was nice to know that we would be out of there quicker.

Although I was being given lots of directions at once and running back and forth, I think my listening skills are getting better. Throughout this event, I tried to ask fewer questions and take responsibility with problem solving rather than wasting more of Stacey or Dara's time when they had other things to do. Stacey was much better at explaining reasons why we do particular things at particular times during this wedding. It was nice to know this because that means next time, I can just do whatever it is that I am supposed to do without question. As I learned at a job at Brockport

from a coworker that I really respect and learned from, it is important lots of times in this industry, and others, to “work smarter, not harder.”

The most stressful part of the night was getting all of the odds and ends to where they are supposed to be, in the right cars, before the parents of the bride and groom leave. Since there was an after party following the reception, it was imperative that we completed this task in a timely manner because the mother of the bride wanted to get there. We had some trouble getting the right things in the right car even though we had a list. I think the communication element was lost when everyone is running around separately for the same items. She was a little upset, but my supervisor was even more upset because that is not what she wants for her reputation. These things happen, but it teaches us to work smarter and quicker next time. It feels like throughout an event, it is a learning process and that is exactly what I was looking forward to during this internship.

DAILY JOURNAL

Wednesday, January 22, 2014

Today was a pretty busy day for me. There is some new business starting to trickle in right now, along with some complications about our office space potentially moving, and so there is a lot that has been put in my hands to complete while Stacey and Missie take care of the clients. I have come to the conclusion that a lot of my responsibility this semester is to help RLE come full circle with their rebrand and be sure that all advertising opportunities, online search venues and anything else that has our name on it, is spick and span and updated to the most current events. Since there are only two full time employees and one part time employee, it is hard for all of the seemingly “little” tasks to be completed. This is where I come in. Many of their photo databases and publications have not been updated in awhile because current clients are always of utmost importance. This means that now that I am here, there is one person that can focus solely (or almost solely) on updating many of these sites like Flickr, Wedding Wire, Style Me Pretty and a few others. It also gives me a change to take a look at past events they have done and how different every client’s vision really is.

I am constantly working on my listening skills. This is something that I thought I would never have issues with because I have always been a good listener, to most people’s standards. However, it is a whole different ball game when you don’t have something to write down notes on and there is a lot of information being told to you at once. This happened to me today, and I tried my best to retain everything and get all of the tasks done. I wasn’t told if I missed anything, so I think I succeeded. However, maybe I need to start thinking about a new strategy for ALWAYS having a pen and paper, or come up with memory devices to use when I am in a situation where it just isn’t appropriate or efficient to write everything down. This is a challenge because I have always been very visual and I am such a “list person.” I like having everything laid out in front of me so that I feel organized. It stresses me out looking at some of the notes I see around the office because they aren’t anything that I can understand because either the handwriting is illegible, or they aren’t in any specific order that makes sense to me. I know that everyone works differently, but it is hard to work in cohesion when not everyone is on the same page. In my opinion, this hasn’t been a huge issue yet, and I hope it doesn’t become one.

DAILY JOURNAL

Monday, January 27, 2014

Today was another average day at RLE Charleston. I worked a lot on our social media rebrand and a strategy for how we are going to make our presence on social media more prevalent. I was really happy to have been given this task since I did take an entire course on social media in recreation settings with Dr. Perry. A lot of what we talked about and practiced came flooding back to me and I was able to give some new and fresh ideas to our strategy and Missie really seemed to like it. She told me the work I did for it was great and the compilation of our competition's social media presence was amazing. I worked hard on it, so it was nice to get positive feedback.

I worked out a weekly schedule for what and when we should be posting on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and our Blog. Another great part about today was being able to write my first blog entry ever. I was nervous about writing for the company because I don't have really any experience like these two women do, but obviously Missie felt comfortable with it or she wouldn't have given me the task. I wrote about how the weather may be cold, but we are working to raise the heat to kick off the busy wedding season that starts soon. I didn't really know what to write, so I just went with what felt right and sent it to Missie at the end of the day. I will hear from her on Wednesday what she thought and hopefully she will give me some tips if the blog is something that I will have a big part in for the future. The social media was mostly what I worked on all day in addition to doing some inventory on linens that came in for the event this weekend. There are actually two events this weekend, a wedding and the annual Roper Gala. I will be working the Roper Gala with Stacey and Dara, which is really exciting. It is a huge 500 - 700 person gala that goes all night. Missie is coordinating the wedding at a different site with Allie and Sarah. I know that both Stacey and Missie are nervous about their events and stressing about not having enough help because the wedding is also very large, at 325 people. I know that both will go off without a hitch! I am really looking forward to being a part of the Roper Gala, however, I know that it is going to be a lot of setup work on Friday and Saturday during the day, and that is always very tiring. Long weekend ahead for sure! I am not sure what I will be doing on Wednesday, but I am sure that it is just more preparation for the gala and wedding this weekend.

DAILY JOURNAL

Friday, January 31-Saturday, February 1, 2014

Friday and Saturday were set up and execution of the Roper Xavier Society Donor Appreciation Gala. This was a 700-person event held at The Charleston Place Hotel. The hotel itself is beautiful, and after all of our hard work and preparation, the ballroom transformed into a magical dinner getaway for the guests attending. On Friday, we loaded everything into our storage room so that we were able to have more time for the smaller details on Saturday. It was a long day of working with the committee ladies from Roper to fold napkins and basically hold their hands through the easy tasks of what they were volunteering for. All of these women come from old southern money, so they are used to having things done for them, but they were all very nice so I can't complain.

We did most of the setup on our end on Friday, and picked up the detail end of setup, as well as managing people, on Saturday. Saturday went by so quickly because there was always so much going on that it was crazy. I was able to keep up with all of the tasks I was given, and I was even ahead of the game at times. It felt great! I was even given lots of thanks and compliments when the event was over. Everyone enjoyed everything so much, and it all went off without a hitch for the guests. I am so exhausted from working so many hours in a row, but I am glad to have this type of

event under by belt and to see how different the inner workings of this type of event are from the weddings that we have done so far. Next week will be preparation for the Chocolate Affair, and I am looking forward to that after recuperation from this weekend!

DAILY JOURNAL

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Today was a jam-packed day of work! I came in an hour early so that I could write the blog post about this upcoming weekend's event. It needed to be up and scheduled to post before we left the office at 9:30 for the Wedding Planners Seminar. This was an interesting gathering, and I wasn't sure what to expect but I was really excited to be included! As we were driving there, Missie warned Dara and I that it was kind of like a sorority rush for the new girls because some of the women are very nice, and some are very catty. I definitely was able to pick up on this the minute we walked in. The majority of the social was spent listening to a presentation about social media and how it can be really effective for all of these women and their businesses. I took lots of notes for my current projects, and it will also be useful in the future. The funniest thing about this presentation was that I took a class on social media in recreation businesses about a year ago, and there are already so many new social media platforms and "rules/guidelines" associated with what's appropriate and effective. Social media is ever changing, and I think it was important for us to reflect on where we are and where we are going in terms of our social media usage.

After the seminar, we were escorted to a luncheon where we chatted with the girls from a paper product (invitations, save the dates, escort cards, etc.) that RLE works with frequently. They were all really nice and I felt very comfortable. It was nice to meet some of these women and maybe this early exposure will help me in the future if I decide to stay in the Charleston area after graduation.

When we returned to the office, I worked on lots of social media things and adding tasks to my task list that is very long now! It is long because I am going to work closely with Missie to build our social media platforms and come up with a plan that will work for our audience and us. I also worked on putting together a print ad that will be going in a local paper very soon. It turned out pretty cool looking, but it was frustrating working with the programs that were chosen. I had to do a bit of problem solving and it was such a long day, that at that point I was ready to give up! I finished the advertisement and it was already time to leave for the day! I have tomorrow off, and I am thankful so that I can get some rest in before long days of work on Thursday and Saturday!

DAILY JOURNAL

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Today was a busy day as usual! I like that I don't feel like I am sitting around twiddling my thumbs, as I assume some interns feel sometimes. Since our luncheon, I have been working a lot with researching some things about social media that maybe I wasn't aware of. It is very interesting how trends change so quickly, as I mentioned before. Now that I have been taking a closer look, I see the differences. I have also been playing around a little bit with some of the new websites and apps that the seminar speaker gave us. They're pretty cool! I wrote two blog posts today, scheduled to be posted soon. One is about the Chocolate Affair this weekend, and the other is about the 2014 Pantone Color of the Year. I will continue doing this and working with elevating our platforms so that we become more present on social media.

That was what most of my work consisted of today, along with helping Missie finalize some hotel wedding block things and contacting others through email. It was just a typical day in the office, and it went by so quickly! After work, we attended the LulaKate fashion show. I've never been to a fashion show before, so I didn't know what to expect. We received some great free gifts! It was a bridal show with some ready wear pieces, and they created a pop up shop afterwards so we could take a closer look at the clothes and jewelry that was featured. It was a great experience, and I met some more people in the industry. I really enjoy that I am introduced to lots of people in the area and related industries.

DAILY JOURNAL

Saturday, February 8, 2014

The Chocolate Affair has definitely been my favorite event so far! It was so different from a wedding and there seemed to be more to do that kept us busy and kept the night rolling. I think it had a lot to do with the fact that it was an event for a non-profit organization. The people were different, the atmosphere was different, the timeline was different and more.

We were there in the morning for setup and the usual morning tasks. Then, as the afternoon rolled on we had a bit of free time to relax, get dressed for the evening and prepare the chocolates for the judges that were coming in at 5:30. It was so much fun being able to prepare the tables with chocolate, but it was also a little stressful since we had to keep track of which bakery brought which desserts in order to put the correct tag with it. This got confusing at times because we kept moving things around for the best aesthetic appeal. Like I said, the people were so different and were happy about the event and easy to interact with. I have found that at the black tie weddings and events, most of the people down here are stuck up. One of the best parts of the night was people could bid on a little black lab that was brought with some of the employees of Communities in Schools. He was such a little cutie, and he went for \$1,700! All in all, Communities in Schools rose well over their goal and were able to send lots of kids to summer camp. I think that I enjoyed this event not only because it was a change of pace, but also because I loved the cause.

DAILY JOURNAL

Saturday, February 22, 2014

Today's 200-person wedding today went well. I am exhausted after a fourteen-hour day, but I am starting to get used to how long these event days are! I really like Founders Hall in the Charles Towne Landing Park because everything is very close together, there aren't any stairs to run up and down, and it is easy to get from the bridal suite to the reception location to the kitchen. At the end of the night, this was especially important. One of the most chaotic parts of the day is when we need to gather all of the bride and groom's materials which include things like the cake knife and server, food, any family heirlooms, toasting glasses, cake topper, cards, gifts and so much more. There are certain things that go with the bride and groom, the groom's family and the bride's family. We need to be sure to have it all together and even in the cars, if possible, before the farewell to the bride and groom. We need to definitely have their things in the exit vehicle because they leave right after their farewell. This gets hectic, but everyone usually gets his or her things in the end.

One of my favorite parts of the night was when one of the guests asked me to dance! I learned how to do the shag, which is very important down south. When I watch people, it seems like everyone knows what they are doing and is something that is engrained in them from a young age. It's great! Even though we are working, we still get to have a little bit of fun.

DAILY JOURNAL

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Time is not on our side lately. So as I have previously mentioned, the Wine and Food Festival is next week, and we are covering the design and décor elements for two of the events. Long story short, we are creating 12 different colored yarn balls made with a paper mâché glue mix. They have to be large enough to be noticed because they are being put in the top of a tent. I was right, and the yarn we used yesterday did not work so Dara and I were on a wild goose chase to buy different balloons because the beach balls don't work, and a whole lot of yarn. We were so stressed out because we just want and need to get it right this time not only because Stacey is very irritated and stressed about it, but also because they need to be done in only just a few days. We blew up three of the large balloons to see if they are good enough sizes since we can't get them as big as the 4-foot beach balls. She was happy with what we had, and we were even able to finish two of them today. It is not an easy task and definitely requires two people. This is lesson to me that in my future events, some Pinterest ideas are just not what they seem. I don't think Stacey has figured this out yet since we are struggling to get this done. In my professional opinion, I would have scrapped the idea and came up with something else. Tomorrow is going to be a long day of paper mâché and at least Stacey is letting us do it outside at her house since we need more room and a place that we can get a little messy.

DAILY JOURNAL

Friday, February 28, 2014

I was right, a crazy day of making yarn balls it was! The first two hours of work, I was running errands for Stacey and a client that was in the office. They wanted to see a mock set up of what the tables are going to look like at their wedding so I got linen, china, silver, and glassware samples to put on the table along with some floral arrangements that were provided by the florist earlier this morning. I picked those things up, did a few office tasks and then left to meet Dara at Stacey's house to begin the grueling task of making the yarn balls.

We figured out that the prep time and clean up alone is what takes up a lot of our time. We can only mix so much of the glue mixture at once and cleaning up the mess is another different story. All day we only made three of the balls, but were able to blow up the rest of them at the gas station air pump. It was a long day, and we are going to try and finish the rest of them on Monday. It is crunch time, so no slacking now!

DAILY JOURNAL

Monday, March 3 - Tuesday, March 4, 2014

The past three days have been nothing but crafting and problem solving. We were working on the yarn balls and finishing up sewing 300 napkins for the events this weekend. The festivities start tomorrow, and it is going to be a long and exhausting weekend with so much to do! I have been told that Wine and Food is very different from other events we work because there isn't an event flow and the event only lasts about 2 hours at a time. I am interested to see how they play out and what our role really is since when we are only in charge of design and décor and not the actual event itself. Not much else to document since I have really only been working on crafts and sewing for the upcoming events for the past three days.

DAILY JOURNAL

Wednesday, March 5 – Saturday, March 9, 2014

This past week's Wine and Food Festival made for a very busy week without almost any break from work. Therefore, I decided to combine this week into one journal entry since I had no time or energy to write a journal entry after every day of work.

Wednesday was prep for Thursday's event and kind of the flow of the weekend. We were getting materials prepared for the rest of the week and finishing up some projects to be sure that all design and décor elements were accounted for and nothing was going to go awry on event day. Thursday's event was the VIP tent, an event exclusively for those individuals that had any part in putting together the festival. The group of about 400 people included representatives from some sponsoring organizations, the Wine and Food Festival committee, event planners, designers, florists, and pretty much anyone else that had their hands in the pot. The color scheme were all of these coppers and golds so we tried to do interesting overlays on cocktail tables, using unique materials so these attendees felt this free event was worth their time and they were able to celebrate their success before the festival really started. There were many unique food displays as well. These aren't something that we had a lot to do with except for the placement of them in the William Aiken House. There was a charcuterie tower that was nothing like I have ever seen before! There were also hand passed hors d'oeuvres and three different specialty drinks for the night as well as wine tastings and an open bar. It took much longer to break down the event than we had anticipated since we had to staple some linens to tables due to wind and rain. However, the staff at the William Aiken House was ready to leave so they were kind of pushing us out the door. It is hard to break down such a large event with just three girls! I met a few people, not many though because there was a breakdown of communication, as usual.

Friday was a day for Dara and I to strategize. We needed to plan how to transport all of the yarn balls we made to the Thomas Bennett House for Sunday's event, as well as how to hang them, which are going where, and other logistical issues. It turned out that one of the yarn balls was in too rough of shape to save. I was really sad about this because that meant we had to make another one. We took our time and made another one Friday afternoon before we had to be downtown to attend the Grand Tasting Tent. Stacey got me a ticket and I was so excited! Stacey couldn't attend because she had client meetings, but around 3:00 pm, Missie, Dara and I went with Greg to the Grand Tasting Tent in Marion Square. Basically, it was a large tent with lots of drink and food tastings for two hours. We had a great time, and it was definitely well needed before the big weekend. Dara and I had loaded up lots of supplies on Wednesday and Friday in our cars, so we were ready to go on Saturday morning to set up at the Thomas Bennett House for the New+Notable Dinner. This is a dinner where new up and coming chefs cook different dinner pairings for the attendees. Overall, people were very impressed with the work that we put into the décor and had a great time. The only big problem was that these guests were having such a great time that they stayed an hour and half later than the event end time. This meant that we had to wait until 11:30 pm to flip the space. The Saturday night dinner, as well as the Sunday morning brunch, took place in the same tent outside the house. We were going to utilize Saturday night to flip the space, but these people made for a much longer night than we had anticipated. Therefore, we pulled linens as fast as we could and threw out the new tables and chairs. The biggest challenge was hanging the yarn balls. However, we were so grateful to have had PDA help us hang them from the same carabineers that lanterns were hung for New+Notable. If I have learned one thing so far during this internship, it is that having good relationships with the vendors and companies you work with is the key to getting things done efficiently and correctly.

The only other issue I have with the internship thus far is that I feel as though I am just an extra pair of hands sometimes and I am not learning what I thought I would. I was told that I would be included in the planning process for at least a couple of the events. Instead, I feel as though I am just running errands and researching different things on the internet. I don't want to always just do the busy work because it doesn't teach me much except for that sometimes there is a lot of work on the back end when clients ask for certain quotes or price comparisons for outrageous and odd items. I am grateful that I have a large part in the social media plan, and I hope it continues this way. Lately, I haven't had to get my posts reviewed before they are published either! This makes me excited because it gives me some freedom to do what I want and help out our advertising via social media.

Lastly, the brunch on Sunday went marvelous! The décor looked amazing and the palette was made up of bright spring colors! The weather was beautiful and the attendees were very impressed by everything about the event. I look forward to hearing more this week from guests and planners and others involved about what they thought about the festival as a whole and the different events. I was very exhausted by the end of it, and still am, but it was a great experience and showed a whole different side to RLE and our role since usually we are the planners, and usually the event is a wedding. I took a long nap Sunday afternoon, and am into work Monday. Joy!

DAILY JOURNAL

Wednesday, March 19, 2014

Today I worked on finishing up the welcome boxes for the wedding this weekend. It was a quiet day in the office with just Missie and I because Stacey hasn't been feeling well. When I got to the office, Missie gave me the company card to go get some supplies that we needed for this weekend and to pick up the wedding ceremony programs. After that, I was stuffing and wrapping the boxes. I am not working tomorrow, but I am worried that all 100 boxes won't make it to the hotels without my help. Hopefully Dara will be able to do it alone! I also hope that they remember to pick up the Moscow mule glasses.

Each day either Stacey or Missie or both ask me what I am doing after graduation. This is so scary to me! Especially when they ask every day and I really have no idea what I am going to do. I don't know if they are genuinely interested or if they want to see my interest in staying. To be honest, as much of an experience as this has been, I don't feel as though I have learned what I wanted to learn about the planning process and I don't think that I would want to just be a day of employee and that is what they mostly need. Due to the miscommunication in the office and the atmosphere at times, I don't think I can work in an environment like that. We will see what happens in the next month and a half though. Things might change!

DAILY JOURNAL

Friday, March 21, 2014

Today was a long hot day of set up and preparation for the rehearsal dinner and welcome reception for the Shealy-Mostellar wedding. I was curious to see what this group of people was like because Stacey kept saying how great they are and they are young and fun! She was so right! They are a great group of people and I am excited to see how they are at the wedding tomorrow. Each one of the bridesmaids is really great, which I love because typically there is always at least one that is not nice.

Dara and I started at 10 am stringing the escort cards onto boat keys for the display. This was a really interesting idea that I would have never thought of and definitely haven't seen before! Everyone loved it, too! Then we loaded up our cars and took them over to McCrady's restaurant where the parties were taking place. Once we got back to McCrady's, we started setting up both spaces. So, this was an interesting setup that I have never seen before. There was a cocktail hour for guests that were attending the dinner, then they moved to the other room for the seated dinner, and then we flipped the cocktail room with new linens and flower arrangements for the after party (welcome reception) where other guests were invited. This posed to be a challenge when the speeches at dinner went a half an hour over the time that they were supposed to. Guests that weren't invited to the rehearsal dinner were getting antsy and we had to be sure that they were getting drinks and appetizers to keep them entertained. Again, this was a great group of people but they took forever leaving this party. It was supposed to end at 10:30 and we didn't get everyone out until around 11:15. We are curious to see how this happens tomorrow at the Daniel Island Club. They are on a strict schedule, being a country club, and so we need to be sure to manage the end of the night well. Stacey has been under the weather and she left tonight really early for Dara and I to manage, and we have a feeling the same thing is going to happen tomorrow. It is great experience to be left to manage an event like this, but I am glad that I have Dara to direct me since she is technically part time. We know about the same amount of information when it comes to each event, but I like to have someone to look up to at this point in the game.

DAILY JOURNAL

Saturday, March 22, 2014

The wedding went off without a hitch! I think that this wedding has been my favorite event so far. The setup was beautiful, the people were great, and the night flew! My day was a little hectic though because I ran back and forth from downtown to the Daniel Island Club what felt like all day! I picked up food and drinks for the girls since they were getting their hair and makeup done at our office. I dropped those things off and then went to pick up the mother of the groom and bring her to the office. I then ran to the Daniel Island Club to help the girls with the rest of setup. They didn't have much left to do except figure out a minor linen crisis. We had a problem solving moment together and went on our way. We are usually really good about putting our heads together, which is what Stacey always wants because she just usually tells us to figure it out when there is a problem. This gets frustrating at times, but it is probably for the best.

After a couple of hours, I got ready for the wedding and drove back downtown to meet Stacey at Charleston Place with the girls for some photos. I then went to the church downtown to help with preparation for the ceremony. Once the ceremony was about to begin and the bridal party was lined up, I ran back to Daniel Island Club to help with finishing touches and bring last minute things from the bride and Stacey to DIC that needed to be there for the reception. Guests began arriving about five minutes early, which was great! It usually is a bit of an issue when people start showing up more than ten minutes early. The bars are prepped and ready to go, but there becomes an issue with the contracts. Anyways, the guests loved the décor and I cannot get over it still! It was just absolutely beautiful inside and outside, and it is amazing to know that I was a part in making it that way! The night went on without any complications, we were sure to keep tabs on the bride and groom's drinks to be sure they were full and dote over them. The cake cutting, toast and bouquet toss all happened on time and without any panic moments. Stacey left with about three hours left in the night. We were able to handle the bouquet toss, packing the father of the bride's car and getting the exit vehicle and plan all handled. It took a few extra minutes to get the guests out the door, but

they loved the idea of throwing handfuls of lavender for the exit and they lined up right where I told them! It was a great feeling to manage the exit, but nerve-wracking at the same time because I wanted to be able to get the right photograph opportunities. I worked with the photographer closely at that moment, and he was grateful. After that, we madly tore the place down and were out in about 45 minutes! It was a quick cleanup after a quick reception! This wedding was definitely my favorite, and I wish more bridal parties could be as relaxed and happy as this one was.

DAILY JOURNAL

Monday, March 31-Tuesday, April 1, 2014

Monday was the day we moved out of our office and into the new space all in one day! It was a crazy move because not only were we short-handed, we also had handymen working in our old space to fill in holes in the walls and repaint. There was a lot going on in such a small space, but we made it work. Stacey was out with clients all day, but that was kind of nice because Missie and I were able to manage it the way we wanted to without a hawk watching us with critical eyes.

Tuesday was our unpacking and organization day. We also had to work around our handymen putting up our new light fixtures. There were a lot of things to go through because a lot of organization has not happened in awhile. There are lots of very old files that needed to be recycled and other random items put back in their place like fabric swatches and ribbon samples. We were able to rock out a lot of the unpacking, but there were still some things that we couldn't get done since we were also waiting for the Comcast guy to come and hook up our internet, phone and time capsule. We weren't able to work on organizing files all too well when he was in our way. This will be one of my main tasks tomorrow along with working on a few projects for our current clients. It was a couple of exhausting days, but our new office is great! It is very spacious, it is in a new up and coming part of town and it is interesting to see the steps to moving offices for a business. There are more steps to it than I thought, so even a move was a great experience for me.

DAILY JOURNAL

Saturday, April 12, 2014

Today was the most bizarre wedding day yet. Even the venue was a bit different from where we are used to working. Runnymede Plantation is basically a large piece of land with a large oak tree that is over 1000 years old and the ruins of a brick building that burned down years ago. There was a large sail top tent where the reception was taking place, but other than those few things we did not have a building in sight, and we had to make do with the few small tents that were on site for staff and the band. There were some very specific details for this wedding because the bride was a DIY bride. This means that she made a lot of the detailed elements herself, and she happened to be a very persistent micromanager. She was involved in every last detail, which is typical, but the typical bride does not usually plan the wedding herself when she has hired a professional planner.

The day was a very long one because the no-see-ums were out like crazy biting all the guests, and it was a five-hour reception as opposed to a traditional four hours. You wouldn't think that an extra hour would be a whole lot of time, but it makes the night seem like it is dragging. That last hour is definitely a killer! We didn't leave the plantation until around 1 am, and we were terrified of the wildlife out there. The night before, there were wild boars and snakes everywhere, and we weren't prepared to tackle those guys if we came across them on the wedding day. Overall, the ceremony and reception went well other than a snake falling on the bride during their photos, and the groom leaving in his car just minutes before the ceremony started because he needed thinking

time. It was such a bizarre day all around, the bride and groom didn't seem in love, the guests were not a party crowd, the brother was the DJ for an hour and it was terrible, and little things behind the scenes were going wrong throughout the day. The guests didn't seem fazed by what was happening, so we consider it a success all around.

DAILY JOURNAL

Monday, April 14 – Wednesday, April 16, 2014

I was able to experience my first bridal tasting! I went with Missie and one of our couples that are getting married in August and the MOB. I was so excited to experience a tasting not only because it is a tasty treat, but also because it is one of the first times that I was able to work directly with the clients in a setting other than on their wedding day. Unfortunately, I won't be around for their wedding, but I can tell from what I have experienced that they are going to have a beautiful wedding day with amazing food. Missie and Stacy say that CruCatering is the best catering in Charleston. Not only was the food phenomenal and I felt like I didn't need to eat for a week, but they are also very friendly people. The chef came out a few times, and it was great to see her face because typically you don't see the magician behind the curtain. Jill, the head catering manager at Cru, is our rep at RLE and we are so thrilled about that. She managed our tasting and took us through the process. I wish I could have seen the beginning of the process at their first meeting, but that was a few months ago before I got here. Apparently, what we tasted was based off choices that they had made in their first meeting. They talked about the timeline and what kinds of foods they were looking to fill their menu with. I also learned that the traditional sit down dinner is not something that you find in the south a lot. I should have realized this by now since none of the weddings I have worked thus far have had a sit down dinner. We tasted passed appetizers, some small plates, a late night pass and desserts. I was so stuffed by the end, but it was awesome seeing their pleased reactions to the food! It was a great experience for me, and I wish I could have gotten more interaction with the clients throughout each part of the different clients' processes, but I understand that there are other things that need to get done.

JOURNAL SUMMARY

A lot has happened since my last activity report! It is a great feeling to know that my work has a lot to do with how the space comes together and how the guests enjoy themselves. I learned some tough lessons about leadership and office politics, but they are all good things to have under my belt. Social media has been my focus as usual and things have been going as normal. Stacey and Missie need lots of extra help with the next couple of events coming up, so they have asked me to stay. I am more than happy especially because it will help me to get more hours. My journals are much more detailed as to what I have been up to, so it is difficult to summarize!

One of the main reasons that I know I have accomplished my goals is that Missie has said on multiple occasions that I am "the ideal intern" that they could ask for. Not only is this a huge compliment, but nearing the end of my internship it shows me that I have done what was asked of me and I have done it to not only the best of my abilities, but to theirs as well. My first goal was to understand the mission and vision of RLE. Not only do I understand it, I am able to act on it while working events. I did not have to read the service packet once a week because I listen to Missie take new business phone calls almost twice a week where she explains what RLE has to offer. And, I was present for three new business meetings. It was simple to apply the event planning skills because it is something that I observed every day. Stacey always asked for feedback after each event, so it was

easy to talk about areas of improvement. I paid close attention to all details of all of the events, not just one so I exceeded that objective. Lastly, I was able to identify the 5 design principles of the Communities in Schools Chocolate Affair. My third goal was one with which I went above and beyond. I was always an active intern when I was in the office, at events, running errands and even on my days off. I always asked questions and I was always 100% engaged in what I was doing for fear of making a mistake or looking like I don't care. It was easy to accomplish this goal because in my opinion, there would be no point in completing this internship if I didn't truly care about my career after graduation. My fourth goal "to improve communication skills to effectively complete assignments" is one that I worked hard towards. It is difficult when communication is lacking in an office that you work in to begin with, but I didn't want to negatively impact what was already going on. There were some behind the scenes frustrations that I saw from Dara that I didn't want to become a part of. RLE doesn't have the strongest communication for a number of reasons, but I did my best to listen carefully and communicate what needed to be communicated in a timely manner. Of course there are always mistakes made and miscommunications, but I tried my best to not get in the middle of it. I will always keep Stacey, Missie, Dara, Sarah and Allie in my professional network, but I don't know if I will ever encounter the women and men I met while at social events or even working events.

Wine and Food Lowcountry Jazz Brunch was a complete success! It was a very long night/morning of setup and preparation for the day of but it was definitely worth the work. Our assessment during the week after came to the same conclusion over and over. This conclusion was that it was the crowd favorite! This was exciting news for RLE because that means that when the bid comes around next year for events, RLE will be highly coveted to cover the higher profile events. The décor elements all had their challenges and successes, but it was a great experience to see quick problem solving within a team when something doesn't go right and it is crunch time.