

Sydney Hoover

Hometown: De Soto, KS

School: University of Kansas

Internship: North Dakota Newspaper Association

As the pandemic looked like it would persist throughout the summer and beyond, I was anxious I would have no internship opportunities going into my senior year, with many going remote or canceling altogether.

When my professor, Dr. Teri Finneman, approached me with the opportunity to work for the North Dakota Newspaper Association while living at home in De Soto, Kansas, I was thrilled. I was nervous to report on a state I barely knew, but was excited to continue expanding my experiences in journalism throughout the summer.

Through this internship, I had the opportunity to travel through North Dakota with my family for a week — something we likely wouldn't have done otherwise.

I also learned so much about doing my job to the best of my ability no matter the situation, even if it means making phone calls to people three states away in the middle of a global health crisis. It allowed me to develop better communication skills both with my editor and in finding and contacting sources given that we weren't able to meet face to face.

Since starting college, I knew I was interested in a career in community journalism. Rather than focusing on politics or national news, I've always liked being able to localize stories and show how small communities are affected by much larger things, such as the coronavirus. This internship only reinforced this passion.

I loved every second of my time reporting on the rural communities of North Dakota and how they have been impacted over the last five months, and I look forward to using these skills in my future career.

