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Hometown: Beulah, ND

School: North Dakota State University

Internship: Beulah Beacon and Hazen Star



This summer, I have had the wonderful opportunity and experience of working for BHG News. Now, as my internship comes to an end, I am excited to report that my work with them will continue. Though my work will not change significantly, I think this shift is an opportunity to reflect on the people I've met, the stories I've written, and the impact it has had on me.

I was nervous at first to cover a town I hadn't lived in for five years as well as one that I knew nothing about. Now, after working with individuals in Beulah and Center, I must say that I was worried over nothing.

The city of Center, ND is exceptionally lucky to have the city officials that it does. The Council has been more than welcoming of my presence at meetings, and Danielle Butler, the Center City Auditor, has been a phenomenal resource and serves in her role with such passion. I had been unsure as to whether I could adequately report on a town that I knew so little about; however, with the help of Danielle and others, I can now say that I feel informed and completely at home in Center.

Beulah is also in good hands. Gloria Olheiser, the Executive Director of the Beulah Chamber of Commerce, has enthusiastically helped in the writing of a few stories, and her knowledge and commitment is absolutely astonishing.

Even with their help, reporting was a learning curve for me, especially since the overwhelming majority of my college research had been done in the library or online. I recall when, early in my internship, I had wondered to myself "why is no one covering COVID in Oliver County?" My stomach dropped as I realized that it was my responsibility to find that information, sort through it, and communicate it.

Since then, I've done my best to write about the things that really matter in a small town. I had come across a quote from author Isabel Allende, in which she said, "Write what should not be forgotten." This quote effectively changed how I thought of my job. I had attended city council meetings, reported on fundraisers and city events, and covered the establishment of new businesses. However, those stories weren't just about ordinances or prizes or money - these stories were about the people of Oliver and Mercer County. For a long time, I had thought reporting was just about communicating facts; however, I now know that it represents the values of the town it covers, and it reflects their way of life and milestones.

On top of that, writing for a small town paper has given me hope and a feeling of agency in these times of rampant misinformation and poor reporting. It has reminded me of the hundreds and thousands of journalists who cover small towns, cities, states, and international issues with honesty and an unbiased approach. During a time in which trusting the media can be difficult, doing my own reporting has shown me the amount of work that can go into a story and reminded me that there are good and bad individuals in every field. And as I continue writing for the Beulah Beacon and the Center Republican, I will do my best to be a good one.