



Thomas Wright '28

Hometown: Fort Worth, TX
Major: International Studies
City/Country: Tokyo, Japan
Employer: NPO Seibo Japan

This summer I interned at NPO Seibo Japan, a non-profit based in Tokyo. Seibo Japan's mission is simple, provide school meals to children in Malawi Africa through the fair-trade sale of Malawian coffee and tea. The school meal improves not only the children's

quality of life, but also their education.

Throughout my time with Seibo Japan my main areas of focus were communications and education. The communication aspect included outreach to schools internationally in the United States and Canada, with the goal of collaboration. I did this by providing information on our online educational program that aims to allow schools overseas to participate in cultural exchange and learn about social enterprise. My favorite part of my work was the hands-on educational experience I gained when I travelled to schools of all ages to inform students in Tokyo of our mission, and how they can get involved with social enterprise. Every school was different and always welcoming.

Some of my favorite memories include teaching children at a middle school how to play American Football (without access to a football), practicing my Japanese at Sophia University in Tokyo while talking to students about our mission, and even getting to meet with a U.S Embassy Public Affairs Officer about our work.



Mattie Young '28

Hometown: Tuckerton, NJ
Major: International Studies-Russian Bridge
City/Country: Prague, Czech Republic
Employer: Aspen Institute of Central Europe

Thanks to the generosity of the Mertie Buckman Internship Program, I had the opportunity to intern with the Aspen Institute of Central Europe in Prague, Czech Republic. The Aspen Institute of

Central Europe is a global nonprofit organization focused on dialogue surrounding contemporary critical international developments, primarily covering Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, and the broader region. Convening with prominent leaders, the Aspen Institute of Central Europe seeks to advance the transatlantic relationship, drive educational reform, improve governance, and champion values-based leadership. In a non-partisan manner, they conduct roundtables, conferences, workshops, and leadership programs to dedicate space to discuss such pressing developments of our time.

Throughout my time there, I was trusted to aid in our partnership discussions and networking events by creating introduction letters, partnership presentations, and working registration during some of their most important networking events and celebrations. I am proud to see the successful partnerships with Aspen that I have helped create. As an International Studies major, I connected with professionals from varying fields of diplomacy to journalism, gaining excellent advice that will help my future career.

Aligning with my interests in cultural experiences, I explored the Czech Republic from Prague to Brno and Český Krumlov, along with exploring the beauty and understated histories of Poland, Serbia, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, seeing a part of Europe that most take for granted. I am incredibly grateful for all of the relationships, knowledge, and in and out of work experiences that I have gained from my time abroad. From this internship experience, I have learned more about myself and my abilities than ever before, and I believe this experience will aid me in my future academic achievements and career for a long time to come.



RHODES COLLEGE DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CENTER FOR CAREER AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

MERTIE W. BUCKMAN INTERNATIONAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM



SUMMER 2026



Rhodes College
INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

The Mertie W. Buckman International Internship Program

Initiated in 1994 through a generous gift of the Buckman family, The Mertie W. Buckman International Internship Program provides the opportunity for rising junior or senior International Studies majors to broaden global understanding through living and working abroad. Selected students complete an eight-week summer internship in the country of their choice. Recent destinations have included Argentina, Columbia, England, France, Ireland, Japan, and South Africa. Mertie Buckman interns can work alongside international leaders in a variety of work environments from businesses to local human rights organizations.

Qualified applicants are rising junior or senior International Studies majors with a minimum overall/major GPA of 3.3 and relevant language skills. Selected students will earn one credit of I.S. 470 and F11 credit.

The program is coordinated by the International Studies Department Chair, the Center for Career and Professional Development, and the International Studies faculty. Please contact these departments with questions about the program or application materials.



Morgan Drenser Hagmann '27

Hometown: Bloomfield Hills, MI
Major: International Studies & History
City/Country: Prague, Czechia
Employer: HST Chamber of Commerce Switzerland-Czech Republic

This summer, I had the incredible opportunity to work with the HST Chamber of Commerce Switzerland in Prague, a non-profit organization focused on strengthening the economic

relationship between Switzerland and the Czech Republic. By providing networking opportunities, consulting services, and legal assistance, the Chamber of Commerce helps Swiss businesses develop a stronger presence in Prague.

My work centered on outreach. I created infographics and news articles to inform partners of developments in Swiss-Czech relations, gathered contact information for potential partners, and completed reports on various economic and political topics to inform policy decisions. One of the most fulfilling aspects of my internship was seeing the articles I had researched and written be published on the Chamber of Commerce website, where they could inform readers on developments in European economic relations.

Through this internship, I also had the incredible opportunity to work with the Swiss Embassy. In addition to providing the embassy with contact information for Swiss businesses in Prague, I was also invited to several embassy exchange events, where I engaged in a discussion of the role of women in diplomacy with several female ambassadors and connected with interns from across Europe and North America.

My understanding of European politics, my knowledge of Czech history, and my professional skills have grown tremendously during my time in Prague and am I beyond grateful to have had this opportunity.



Ben Hayes '27

Hometown: Fort Worth, TX
Major: International Studies & History
City/Country: Changchun, China
Employer: Changchun American International School (CAIS)

This past summer, I had the incredible opportunity to intern at Changchun American International School, a fully accredited IB school in Changchun, China, serving students from over 30 countries. My work spanned English tutoring, curriculum development, and administrative observation. The biggest project I took on was reorganizing the school's English book collection, cataloguing over 500 books, assembling classroom book sets, and drafting the English curriculum for the coming year. I also was able to shadow the principal, observing teachers and sitting in on end-of-year faculty presentations, where I was able to see what school leadership involves day to day.

Outside of school, Changchun gave me more than I expected. I visited the Manchukuo Imperial Palace where I learned about the Japanese puppet regime that controlled northeast China in the 1930s, and learned about a chapter of history I had no knowledge of before. I also had the chance to visit the U.S. Consulate and meet the ambassador.

Most afternoons I found myself in a park bigger than Central Park, watching families fish, groups of people dance, and neighbors play cards together. I am leaving with a deeper appreciation for the culture, the people, and the kind of community I hope to help build in schools someday.



Sofia Lewis '28

Hometown: Brooklyn, NY
Major: Political Science & International Studies
City/Country: Rabat, Morocco
Employer: EngLead Global

This summer, I had the opportunity to intern in Rabat with EngLead Global, a company whose mission is to help brilliant Moroccan women reach their full potential in English through the “Power Seat Program.” As an intern, I

graded assignments and coached inspirational leaders one-on-one, from practicing company pitches to NGO mission statements. It was so beautiful to see such accomplished women grow more confident with each lesson.

In addition, I had the chance to assist EngLead Global's partnership with the IDMAJ Cultural and Community Center in Salé, a wonderful organization creating countless programs for some of Morocco's most underserved communities, especially women and children. I developed an English-learning curriculum for a group of mothers and assisted in workshops on female empowerment, confidence-building, and language learning. Both aspects of my internship were so rewarding and memorable, as I got to learn about Morocco from locals while also building my pedagogy skills.

Outside my job, I lived with a host family and travelled to various cities, including Marrakech, Fes, Tangier, and the Sahara Desert. From watching World Cup games at local restaurants to wandering through bustling souks to celebrating Eid with my host family, I fell in love with Moroccan culture and cannot wait to return eventually. This internship taught me the value of experiencing global workplace cultures, and I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to grow professionally while enjoying everything Morocco has to offer.



Ryan Thorn '27

Hometown: Charlotte, NC
Major: International Studies
City/Country: Barcelona, Spain
Employer: Generación 02

Through the generosity of the Mertie W. Buckman International Internship Program, I had the incredible opportunity to spend my summer living and working in Barcelona, Spain. As a Social Impact and Fundraising Intern with Generación 02, I combined my interests in

international studies, advocacy, research, and nonprofit development while supporting an organization dedicated to advancing LGBTQ+ inclusion, healthcare access, immigration advocacy, and disability services. Throughout the internship, I researched philanthropic trends in Spain, developed a comprehensive fundraising strategy,

created a fundraising evaluation system for organizational projects, and contributed to outreach initiatives, market research, and diversity training initiatives. One of the highlights of my internship was presenting in Spanish during a hospital diversity training, which strengthened both my professional communication skills and my confidence working in another language.

Outside of work, I immersed myself in Spanish culture, improved my Spanish while gaining exposure to Catalan, and explored Barcelona's historic neighborhoods and traveled throughout Europe. Overall, I am incredibly grateful for the professional skills, relationships, and global perspective I gained through this experience, and I know my time in Barcelona will continue to shape my academic journey and future career in international law.



Farzona Toshkenboyeva '28

Hometown: Tashkent, Uzbekistan
Major: International Studies & Business
City/Country: Tokyo, Japan
Employer: Frost & Sullivan Japan K.K.

This summer, I had the opportunity to intern at Frost & Sullivan Japan K.K. in Tokyo, Japan. During my eight-week internship, I worked on consulting projects involving international markets across industries such as electric vehicles, manufacturing, and aerospace. My research supported clients and

companies in Japan, the United States, China, and South Korea, giving me a firsthand look at how global markets are connected. One of the most rewarding moments was seeing my research used in meetings with clients and answering their questions about the markets I had studied.

Outside of work, I met amazing people through my internship program who quickly became close friends. Together we explored Tokyo's neighborhoods, tried new foods, experienced the city's nightlife, and, of course, did plenty of shopping. I also had the chance to visit Kyoto, Nikko, and other local towns, which helped me appreciate Japan's culture beyond the busy city.

Living in Japan taught me to be more independent, manage my time, adapt to the language barrier, and appreciate the importance of punctuality. This experience helped me grow both personally and professionally and gave me confidence that international consulting is the career I want to pursue.

