



2025 Externship Descriptions and Quotes by Industry Sector

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Engineering and Manufacturing Descriptions

	Workplace Host	Teacher Extern	Description of Project	Extern Quote
EM	Accumold, Ankeny	Barb Burns, Dowling Catholic	Barb's main project at Accumold was the Work Instruction Improvement Project. She made a significant contribution to the team by creating the framework for tracking progress and prioritizing work. Her main responsibility was to rewrite the highest priority work instructions for better clarity and understanding. Work instructions were prioritized for the Micromold business unit, with those that impact safety and quality receiving attention first. She was able to make an improvement of over 16%. The project is important because it will lead to a better training experience for new employees, employee retention, and ultimately higher quality in the finished product.	<i>My favorite aspect of the Externship was that the project I was working on seemed to be valuable to the company. I sensed it wasn't just busy work but that they really wanted it to be done.</i>
EM	POET, Arthur	Bill Collins, Maple Valley Anthon Oto CSD	Bill Collins spent the summer as an extern at the POET Bioprocessing plant in Arthur, Iowa. Bill worked with a number of personnel who are tasked with the operation and maintenance of the plant. One of the current issues that Bill was able to work with were the attempts to raise corn oil production, which included mechanical and chemical components to raise the efficiency of the plant. Bill was also able to use this experience to develop multi-discipline problem solving which could be	<i>Investigating the process of making ethanol and all the seemingly small ways science and math is used to fine tune the process – Essentially it is a problem-solving laboratory in action, trying to find all the small parts which help in efficiency and thus profitability.</i>
EM	Geater Machining and Manufacturing, Independence	Cain Cushion, Wapsie Valley CSD	Cain worked at Geater Manufacturing and Machining in the sheet metal, machining, and drill press departments of production. During his time, he learned to manipulate programmed machines that produced parts from aluminum for the aerospace industry. Cain would need to be able to edit programs to produce the parts efficiently so that a high level of quality control was preserved. Communication and collaboration were a vital part of the externship, as he had to effectively communicate with employees from other departments with the same, positive end-goal in mind.	<i>Geater has made a large investment in education because they know where their development team comes from. It is our job in education to continue to show students these opportunities.</i>
EM	Woodbine Manufacturing/Tommy Gate, Woodbine	Michael Dorland, Missouri Valley CSD	Michael worked at Tommy Gate/Woodbine Manufacturing this summer in the company's engineering department, gaining real-world experience in advanced manufacturing. His work focused on CNC turning, manual machining, and welding, where he helped produce precision parts used in Tommy Gate's hydraulic lift systems. As part of the engineering team, Michael assisted in programming CNC lathes, operating shop equipment, and troubleshooting equipment. His contributions helped streamline part production and reinforce Tommy Gate's reputation for high-quality, American-made products.	<i>Biggest takeaway this week was how important effective communication is on the plant floor. To maintain a safe and efficient workflow, everyone has to keep aware of their surroundings and coordinate with the workers around them constantly.</i>

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EM	APC Emmert, Cedar Rapids	Josh Eaton, College Community CSD	During his time at APC Emmert, Joshua has been actively involved in multiple aspects of the fabrication process. He has gained hands-on experience in welding, bending, and cutting operations, working alongside skilled fabricators on real-world jobs. These experiences have allowed him to strengthen his technical abilities while deepening his understanding of fabrication workflows and shop operations. One of Joshua's most impactful contributions is the development of a custom destructive bend testing device.	<i>It was a great mix of learning by doing, applying theory in real-time, and seeing how years of experience translate into small decisions that have a big impact on the final product. This kind of hands-on experience is exactly what I hope to bring back into the classroom—not just the skills, but the mindset behind them.</i>
EM	Art's Way Manufacturing, Armstrong	Lydia Fothergill, North Union CSD	Lydia worked at Art's Way Manufacturing as part of purchasing team. She made contributions to the team by cleaning up location and supplier contact information data in the Item Master database, entering Country of Origin/HTS Commodity Code in Item Master records for purchased items, and Barcoding items/inventory locations. This position required her to use Excel spreadsheets and database to enter, retrieve, and manage data in the company records.	<i>Communication is an important skill in a manufacturing setting. There are so many different people who all have a role in the production from ordering the parts the salesperson to the shipping department who is in charge of getting it out the door. No matter what role a person has, they will have to use communication of some sort.</i>
EM	Custom-Pak, DeWitt	Albert Hayton, Clinton CSD	Albert is working with the quality control department and IT at Custom-Pak. Albert has been an integral part of creating a library of product specific information that will be used to aide in bringing all parties to the table with all the right information. Albert is helping create this library so sales, customers and future customers, quality control and production are provided with the most up to date information of the products. Albert is helping find the right information (weight, heights, temperature, thickness, cycle, etc.) needed so we can create the best quality product we can for the customer at the most cost-efficient way.	<i>I have had a lot of support from those I have worked with at Custom Pak and their willingness to engage with the students.</i>
EM	K&W Electric, Emmetsburg Midwestern Mechanical, Spencer	Jason Holt, Emmetsburg CSD	Jason shared his time with two commercial contractors in the construction industry during his experience. He worked with Midwestern Mechanical in their plumbing division learning the skills of an apprentice in several different job sites. He then transitioned to K&W Electric, Inc. working as an apprentice electrician at several different job sites. Both settings enhanced Jason's skills, to bring real world experiences back to his classroom. This experience allows students to gain knowledge of the industries and create interest in the trades.	<i>The two experiences that I have this summer specifically to enhance my skills in the areas of plumbing and electricity. This way I can teach the content to the students accurately with the current methods in each of the areas. It is my hope that some of my students will find a love of the trades and pursue one of them as a career.</i>
EM	Klunder Building Solutions, Cedar Falls	Grant Kelly, Union CSD	Grant worked as a carpenter for Klunder Custom Homes. He worked on many aspects of residential home construction, from framing, inspection adjustments, siding, trimming cabinets, custom-built-in shelving, base crown, to outside siding as well. The hours working alongside Klunder and all the other trades gave him a deep understanding of all of the small things that need to come together to make a house a useable and livable space, and all the unique skills that are required to do so.	<i>The logistical side of getting all the things done, and the trades in the door in the right timely windows of when the work is ready and will be needed to keep work flowing for everyone. If the Logistical flow isn't managed it could easily add a year or more to even a basic home.</i>
EM	Favorite, LLC, Orange City	Lydia Kerekes, Orange City Christian	During her time at Favorite, a creamery specializing in goat cheese and gelato, Lydia assisted with both the agricultural and production sides of the business. She contributed to the goat milking routine and supported efficiency in the creamery by helping package products for customers, including weighing, labeling, and assembling cheese and gelato orders.	<i>I now have a business to partner with in showing my students a part of how we get our food. It has been a unique experience to work with goats and creating products and will be an experience I look back on for many years.</i>
EM	Barilla America, Ames	Tony McCutchen, Winterset CSD	Tony worked alongside the Barilla Technology Division, contributing to real-world innovation while gaining first hand insight into industrial food production. His primary role focused on helping digitize operator workflows streamline daily processes, reduce paperwork, and increase efficiency on the production floor. Tony was invited to participate in the development and evaluation of a new pasta format. This hands-on experience allowed him to explore the entire product lifecycle, from early testing and quality control to packaging and final presentation.	<i>For the first two weeks I got to shadow so many people, get my hands dirty, sweat, laugh, and make connections. I have been able to see so many of my "forever" skills used in chemistry and physics, namely: Problem solving, graph reading, trend analysis, plotting, ratios, ratios and more ratios.</i>
EM	MidAmerican Energy, Urbandale	Kathy McGrane, West Des Moines CSD	Kathy McGrane is an Iowa STEM Teacher Extern with Corporate Training at MidAmerican Energy Company, where she integrates the Energy Industry Fundamentals curriculum in her work with high school interns. She is also researching ways to expand educational outreach in our communities in relation to the utilities industry and MidAmerican Energy. With these activities, Kathy hopes to encourage students to consider STEM-related careers, particularly those in the energy sector.	<i>I have more credibility when I speak to students about because I have experienced in a workplace that they have all heard of. Because we all know that we are not just teaching content--we are also teaching behaviors they will carry for many years.</i>

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EM	Interstates, Sioux Center	Sandra Nyenhuis, Unity Christian	Sandra spent her summer at Interstates. She worked with the Virtual Design and Construction team as a tech learning how to design electrical systems for industrial manufacturing and processing facilities. She did job shadows with each team at Interstates to find out how each group works to create a final product for the customers. Sandra will be able to take the information she has learned and apply it to her CAD and Engineering Design classes	<i>I learned firsthand that the design I made needed a lot of work before it was actually going to work for the customer. Knowing the frustration that I had with wasting time and money in making the product helped me realize that more questions and measurements earlier in the project would have made a huge difference in the outcome of my project.</i>
EM	Rosenboom, Sheldon	Kimberly Poeckes, South O'Brien CSD	Kim worked in a variety of roles at Rosenboom Custom Cylinders. While working with the Continuous Improvement Team she helped to facilitate an event that did a deep dive into making one of the production lines function more efficiently to improve productivity and morale. She also worked with the team in metal finishing to develop a process for repairing chrome-plated metals that have been damaged. Kim gained experience in dealing with OSHA regulations while working on a heat illness and injury prevention plan.	<i>It was gratifying to see that the science and math in my curriculum is being put to use in the real-world. Now I can give specific examples of the application, rather than just the old standby of, "Yes, you need this in real life!" Thank you for this humbling experience, it was a summer I will not forget.</i>
EM	RCS Millwork, Ankeny	Scott Schiefelbein, Winterset CSD	RCS Millwork and Scott are building an Academy to develop a new wave of cabinetmakers. The current workforce is aging and RCS would like to ensure that they have a qualified and skilled population of future employees. That is why we have partnered together to develop an Academy that teaches skills needed to perform the work at RCS.	<i>I could share many things that were very enjoyable about my externship, but my favorite parts were being heard, appreciated, validated, and trusted to do the job. The private sector has been very welcoming and I am looking forward to using my learning in my classroom.</i>
EM	LeClaire Manufacturing, Bettendorf	Joe Shoemaker, Bettendorf CSD	Joe worked at LeClaire Manufacturing as manufacturing support. He worked on a variety of projects aimed at creating and maintaining a storeroom as well as streamlining the process or several projects for the new G4 line of parts. Joe's position relied on several skills he picked up in college making him go back to his roots in machining to complete the various projects.	<i>I am in the process of talking to the engineering department about getting some old prints to show students. I think this would be nice to be able to show students what the world expects from them after they graduate high school.</i>
EM	Accumold, Ankeny	Avery Wolfkill, Waukee CSD	During Avery's summer with Accumold, she worked primarily with the Production Support Team. This team is responsible for the highly specialized manufacturing process of producing extremely small thermoplastic parts. Avery collaborated with fellow teacher extern Barb Burns to improve work instructions utilized by production workers. This will support production workers by enhancing their skills and understanding of micro-mold processes, and it will also contribute to even higher-quality parts.	<i>This process has made me reflect on my direct instruction for students. This experience has been a good reminder of what it feels like to students when introducing a new topic and feeling lost. Accumold and I have similar goals of wanting that initial "buy-in".</i>
EM	Deery Brother CDJR of Waukee	Tyler Wright, Waukee CSD	At Deery Brothers Waukee, Tyler rotated through departments including Quick Lane, service, parts, sales, and finance to gain a comprehensive understanding of the automotive industry. He shadowed technicians during routine maintenance and diagnostic work, assisted in basic service tasks, and observed the service advising process from intake to customer communication. Time spent in the parts and sales departments provided valuable insight into inventory management, customer relations, and the role of digital systems in dealership operations	<i>In addition to technical learning, it was also really informative to see the diagnostic and troubleshooting process that technicians use.</i>
EM	LMT Defense, Eldridge	Brayden Zaruba, Muscatine CSD	Brayden has been working with LMT Defense, designing and testing fixtures for laser engraving parts. Using the skills he has learned from teaching his students, machining, and engineering, he's able to produce fixtures that are easy to machine and work effectively in the environment.	<i>I'm designing ways for the company to design fixturing to improve production while also decreasing the wear and tear on the human body. One of the machines I'm designing fixtures for the operator only has 1 arm. I'm now constrained to design things that not only work to improve production but also be useable by someone with one arm.</i>

Technology and Mathematical Modeling Descriptions

	Workplace Host	Teacher Extern	Description of Project	Extern Quote
TM	ACT, Iowa City	Walaa Alshafei, Iowa City CSD	Walaa works in Jira, the application ACT uses to organize and manage tasks, document progress, and coordinate evaluations. She is helping keep projects on track by ensuring that tasks are properly documented and ready for review during the next evaluation cycle. She has gained valuable insight into real-world methods for identifying system vulnerabilities and understanding how attackers might exploit them deepening her knowledge of network and application security that will enhance her cybersecurity curriculum.	<i>Seeing how real-world vulnerabilities are identified, prioritized, and addressed has given me a much deeper understanding of these critical security concepts beyond theory alone. This firsthand experience will have a big impact, as I bring real examples and practical knowledge into the classroom with actual industry practices.</i>

	Workplace Host	Teacher Extern	Description of Project	Extern Quote
TM	Clayton County Development Group, Elkader	Kaydian Davis-Goodwin, Ed-Co CSD	Kaydian worked with Clayton County Development Group to promote vacation rental lodging. She learned how guest spending at rental properties supports local development by contributing tax revenue. She created promotional videos with voiceover narration. She also used AI to analyze guest reviews, photos, and property details, gaining insights into market trends and guest preferences in order to generate content to improve listing descriptions and overall marketing impact. Her efforts directly benefited vacation rental and lodging owners by boosting property visibility, increasing guest engagement, and enhancing revenue potential.	<i>My favorite part of the externship was learning directly from local businesses and community members about the real challenges they face. Talking with business owners and employees helped me understand important issues like hiring, marketing, and using technology. As a business teacher, this knowledge helps me connect what I teach to real-world situations.</i>
TM	Collins Aerospace, Cedar Rapids	Dana DeGeeter, Iowa City CSD	Dana worked at Collins Aerospace on an SoC (System on Chip) board utilizing Linux, C, and Python to create software to explore communications and data-sharing while documenting his research and implementation. Dana works with a couple of interns to develop and utilize multiple aspects of the board for a client.	<i>It's important not to settle on getting something completed, but that you also try to dig deep and understand why you did the things you did. I think most positions in industry require new skills, systems, and protocols than you learn in college. It's important to be flexible, determined, and humble when taking on a new position.</i>
TM	Pella Corporation, Pella	Karen Fairchild, Cardinal CSD	During Karen's time at Pella Corporation, she worked on collecting and calculating data of pre- and post-consumer recycling information of many of Pella's window and door products. The calculated data was then used to help streamline the process of writing letters for LEED certification. She worked within the sustainability portion of the company on the Innovation & Design Team, while collaborating closely with individuals in the engineering, environmental, and drafting departments.	<i>I envision introducing blueprints several different times throughout the course. I haven't exactly figured out how I will do this, but I will. I think this will help my students who need to know why we do the math I teach, and it will also provide the concrete and practical learning that many of my students need.</i>
TM	Three Trees Data, Lake City	Marcus Feldhans, South Central Calhoun CSD	Marcus contributed to several key initiatives with Three Trees Data. A major focus of his work involved networking, updating district technology infrastructure, and managing a wide range of technology devices. These projects required Marcus to enhance his proficiency in working with fiber optics and configuring secure network environments. Additionally, he played a vital role in managing and updating technology materials. Throughout the summer, Marcus refined his skills in troubleshooting technical issues and implementing effective solutions.	<i>I often tell my students how important it is to stay curious and always be open to learning new things. This experience allowed me to model that mindset and gain insight into a field I didn't have much prior knowledge about, which not only expanded my own understanding but also gave me something valuable to bring back and share in the classroom.</i>
TM	Kluesner Sanitation, Farley	Grady Gallagher, Beckman Catholic	Grady Gallagher completed an externship at Kluesner Sanitation, LLC. Throughout the summer, he focused on rebuilding the company's website, creating content, developing a branding strategy, and enhancing the online customer experience. This included taking and updating photos, auditing the workflow, and developing interactive pages that hold necessary information for the current and future updates. In addition to his work on digital improvements, Grady contributed to various business operations, including billing, accounting, and payroll support.	<i>The biggest impact on me has been the connection of what I have been teaching about small business social media and web presence and how I can tweak this to become even more authentic. This will really benefit my students as they create their own businesses, work at small businesses, or start their side hustles.</i>
TM	HNI Corporation, Muscatine	Brad Goedken, Assumption Catholic	Brad joined the Merchandising Team of the HNI Workplace Furnishings. They provide an extensive set of offerings that are a combination of Series, Product Codes within each series, and Model SKUs within each product. Brad accomplished a Product CAGR analysis, and 2025-2027 forecasting of products sold by distribution partners at the Series/Product/SKU level and created a Sales Omnipresence and Ubiquitous Distribution Model as part of the HNI Hoshin Kanri strategic planning.	<i>My favorite aspect is being able to have a measurable positive impact for the company, where I give more than I receive. I accomplished that this year with new projects initiated bringing net new revenue</i>
TM	Homesteaders Life Company, West Des Moines	Thor Heimdal, Dallas Center Grimes CSD	During Thor's time at Homesteader's Life Company, he created a product comparison tool to be used between sales agents, customers, as well as internally. This project used Microsoft Excel and sales data to help customers choose the products that suit them best by projecting future growth, claims, and sales between the available products.	<i>I dove into understanding how premiums, claims, and growth are calculated for the insurance policies offered by Homesteader's Life Company. It's been a great learning experience to see how these components interact and contribute to the overall performance of a policy.</i>
TM	NewBoCo, Cedar Rapids	Becky Herman, Iowa BIG	This is Becky's second summer working with NewBoCo K-12 Team and is continuing her work with the Girls Who Code fall session planning. She is helping pull in businesses to participate in the Holiday Lights Project and imagining how kids can experience the Design Thinking Process by engaging users (business owners) in their light display planning. Other responsibilities include bringing a high school teacher's perspective to upcoming projects and helping formulating ideas of how to integrate computer science into what teachers are already doing in their classes.	<i>Students learn by doing, and that builds the skills. Can you imagine a CTE classroom where the teacher just talks about "doing the thing" instead of actually having kids "do the thing?" I think that is the frustration some kids have in traditional academic-focused classes</i>

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TM	Clayton County Energy District, Elkader	Madyson Larson MFL-MarMac CSD	Madyson worked with Clayton County Energy District (CCED). She completed projects, ranging from researching energy comparisons and benchmarking energy burden improvement initiatives to website design and energy educational programming efforts. In addition, the help with website design and added graphics will help entice visitors to learn more about energy regulations, effects, and progress for the future. The implementation of new or improved energy educational resources, especially for younger audiences, will help engagement and understanding of energy as a whole.	<i>I love anything to do with developing websites. I was able to dig into CSS and HTML backside work. It has been great to practice with this, especially because one small change can make a big difference. You are also able to access more features in the backend compared to the frontend.</i>
TM	Sears Seating, Davenport	Brian Price, Davenport CSD	Brian worked with the Manufacturing Engineering group to assist on the scale up of a new production facility for an updated product line supplying a well-known truck manufacturer. He performed time studies on each of the assembly and subassembly stations of the production line to improve the data supplied to Sears' new enterprise resource program. He is also brought an outsider's perspective on developing processes and provided feedback the goal of continuous improvement in manufacturing.	<i>An interesting parallel between this small manufacturer and education is how difficult it is to change processes and attitudes about our ultimate mission. A phrase that my supervisor is tired of hearing is "that's how we've always done it," especially when the data and feedback from customers is screaming that we need a different approach!</i>
TM	Wright Service Corp, West Des Moines	Denice Rausch, Johnston CSD	In her time with Wright Service Corp. Denice worked in Change Management on job aids and testing a new application - Scribe.	<i>Even though I am an extern with limited time, Wright Service Corporation continues to immerse me in knowledge about their company and the company's history this week. They have a beautiful, strong history to be proud of too.</i>
TM	JARD, Inc, Sheldon	Katie Schroeder, Sibley- Ocheyedan CSD	During Katie's time with JARD Inc., she worked in the marketing department. Katie researched various marketing strategies, developed email and social media campaigns, and updated website content/product manuals. Katie even had opportunities to research and pilot new technologies incorporated into the company, such as payroll software and AI. This experience required Katie to utilize communication skills, problem-solving, and creativity to meet JARD's needs.	<i>I think educators are tempted to teach durable skills in an isolated format. The teacher may cover communication skills one day and problem solving another. Though both skills are important to define and understand independently, I think it is imperative that educators start showing students how inseparable they are.</i>
TM	Podium Ink, Mount Ayr	Emily Thomas, Mount Ayr CSD	During her time at Podium Ink, Emily played a key role in both the printing workshop and the darkroom. In the printing workshop, she contributed to the production of custom apparel using screen-printing and direct-to-film (DTF) printing. In the darkroom, she prepared screens for printing by routinely handling screen prep and cleanup.	<i>Through the Iowa STEM Teacher Externship Program, I was able to build meaningful connections with the team at Podium Ink while also learning skills I didn't get the chance to fully explore in college. It's such a rewarding experience to not only gain new skills myself, but to bring them back into my classroom for my students to learn and apply in both Art and STEAM.</i>
TM	HNI Corporation, Muscatine	Josh Traxler, Riverside CSD	Josh worked as part of HNI's Learning and Development Team as a data specialist. Josh's primary task was to automate and improve an Excel Report for the Learning and Development Team into a Power BI data analysis. Josh worked on predictive analysis focused on determining how taking learning and development courses affects the performance of their sales team. Josh also collaborated on the development of several Power BI online trainings	<i>I really think that many companies in the future are going to expect a certain amount of data fluency and ability to use data analysis software. The data analysis is mostly using basic statistics but also, I think understanding linear piece-wise functions from Algebra would be helpful for understanding many trends that we see in graphs.</i>
TM	NewBoCo, Cedar Rapids	Amy Tursi, Marion CSD	Amy worked with NewBoCo's K-12 team. Her focus for the summer was researching quality science lessons that also promote computer science learning. The goal is for NewBoCo to take these activities to science teachers who can implement them into their lessons without training or rearranging curriculum. It should be easy for teachers to incorporate computer science where they might not previously have done so. Amy worked with the Girls Who Code program, adding science activities into the sessions, strengthening the science and computer science integration.	<i>Samantha is super good about taking time out of her busy day to explain things to both me and Becky. AI left me hanging, but Samantha explained it!</i>
TM	Moveero, Armstrong	Allison Walders, North Union CSD	Allison worked at moveero this summer. This summer she had a few projects to work on. One was digitizing files to make them more accessible and easier to reference. Another was collecting data for a time study on a new robotic cell. Time studies are used to help with plans for continuous production improvement.	<i>"Having real-world experience has helped me have thoughtful conversations with my students about expectations of employers. I think it really helps them to know that even as adults, we take risks and go outside out comfort zone to learn new things.</i>
TM	Midstates Bank, Missouri Valley	Clint Sargent, Missouri Valley CSD	Clint has gained hands-on experience in a wide range of banking operations—from teller services and customer support to financial lending, compliance, and fraud prevention. His main focus was on creating a Fraud Awareness and Prevention presentation that will be used to educate community members. Clint helped plan and lead the bank's first-ever Fraud Awareness and Prevention Summit, a community event designed to raise awareness and provide practical strategies for identifying and avoiding fraud.	<i>The most impactful part of my externship at Midstates Bank was the opportunity to experience multiple facets of the banking industry while actively working on a real project that connected directly to both my classroom and the broader community.</i>

Field Sciences Descriptions

	Workplace Host	Teacher Extern	Description of Project	Extern Quote
FS	Tallgrass Prairie Center, Cedar Falls	Travis Angell, Waverly Shell Rock CSD	Travis worked with staff to maintain a diverse array of native prairie plants. His responsibilities included transplanting greenhouse-grown seedlings into designated plots on the grounds. He assisted with weeding and ongoing maintenance to support healthy growth. Travis helped collect and store seeds. He also participated in fieldwork, traveling to various prairie sites to collect additional seeds, thereby enhancing the genetic diversity of the Center's seed bank.	<i>Each day at the Tallgrass Prairie Center involved hard, physically demanding work, but the team I worked with made the time fly by. I truly enjoyed being around people who are so passionate about their work and committed to making the world a better place.</i>
FS	Lauritzen Gardens, Omaha, NE	Emm Anunson, Bishop Heelan Catholic School	Emma worked as a part of the Lauritzen Gardens Horticulture team this summer. While there, she contributed to several projects, including an ethnobotany research project on plants of cultural significance, plant data collection and organization, and creating collections of rare or significant plants in the Gardens. Emma developed and utilized skills such as plant nomenclature, data entry, collaborative teamwork, and joining scientific and cultural research.	<i>Getting to learn about each plant up close and getting information from the team at the gardens is an opportunity most of the public does not get, so I am trying to soak in as much as I can. As always, there is so much to do and accomplish!</i>
FS	Blank Park Zoo, Des Moines	Gabrielle Beckman, Norwalk CSD	During her time with the zoo Gaby worked with both the public education and day camp teams. With the public education team, she was onsite at the zoo educating visitors or offsite with ambassador animals bringing the zoo to libraries and summer schools. With the day camp team, she was provided a fun, yet educational, summer camp experience. She gained knowledge of how scientific concepts are used to ensure the animals are given the best possible care.	<i>It was really cool to see the excitement from the kids. The camp reminded me that we can tap into that innate curiosity to help students learn and oftentimes it is worth it to take a little bit of time to follow that curiosity rather than just pushing through content.</i>
FS	Indian Creek Nature Center, Cedar Rapids	Cassie Bowdre, Lisbon CSD	Cassie created a geology investigation area at Indian Creek Nature Center designed to engage visitors with Iowa's deep geological past. She curated interactive exhibits and organized specimen drawers featuring regional fossils, sedimentary rocks, and glacial deposits. The displays not only explored paleontology and stratigraphy but also introduced key geophysical principles. Cassie helped visitors understand how physical forces, such as pressure, temperature, and tectonic stress, shaped the structure and stability of Iowa's subsurface geology.	<i>The most impactful part of my externship was the connections that I have made. I now have more people that would be willing to have my students come out or even have them present in my classroom as experts to better educate and engage my students.</i>
FS	Clinton County Conservation, Grand Mound	Eric Brown, Clinton CSD	Eric's work, alongside Natural Resource Technician and Maintenance employees, was primarily focused on the management and maintenance of county Wildlife and Hunting Areas. The public will notice the better habitat establishment and wildlife populations and increase utilization, adding value to local communities and economies. Specifically, Eric contributed time and labor in maintaining public lands in mowing tree plantations, removal of invasive species, and occasionally lending a hand in park maintenance and set up for public programs.	<i>We are always being encouraged and expected to innovate with our grade level colleagues to create meaningful and authentic learning experiences and to cross the curricular boundaries, when possible. This summer's experience was a push that I needed to make that happen in collaboration with the Science teacher on my team!</i>
FS	Fayette County Conservation, Fayette	Bailey Bushman, West Central CSD	Bailey worked with Fayette County Conservation this summer. She helped out with educational programs, including camps for elementary students and creating display materials for the nature center and social media pages. This position allowed Bailey to see what Fayette County has to offer in terms of natural areas and educational opportunities for her students.	<i>Content is not always the most important thing in the workplace. Employees can learn on the job. One employee at Fayette County Conservation came into the job not knowing much about Iowa or Fayette County and has learned so much and continues learning all she can. It is alright if students don't know everything, we need to teach them how to learn and how to be curious about the world around them.</i>
FS	City of Des Moines Forestry, Des Moines	Anna Christian, Urbandale CSD	Anna worked with the City of Des Moines Forestry team working on the overall tree canopy of Des Moines. She helped plant trees, take tree inventory, assess sites for tree planting, and identify healthy and sick trees. Anna used her knowledge of math to create a city standard for tree box planting given the volume of soil.	<i>Geometry has already been figured out by foresters, but they use a device called "D-tape" to measure the diameter of a tree. As we can't get inside each tree to determine the diameter, we can measure the circumference of the tree and divide by pi. The D-tape already has pi factored in so to find the diameter of the tree; they just have to measure with the tape</i>
FS	Effigy Mounds National Monument, Harpers Ferry	Dawn Colsch, MFL MarMac CSD	During Dawn's time at Effigy Mounds National Monument, she worked with the Interpretation staff. She led tours on the Yellow River Boardwalk trail, participated in events such as the Migratory Bird Event, and helped in the visitor center and store. One of her main projects was developing a public resource for the Yellow River Water Trail in the Heritage Unit of Effigy Mounds National Monument. She researched the flora and fauna of the area and worked on a 4 x 9 infographic that visitors may take with them as they float down the Yellow River.	<i>My favorite part of my experience was having time to develop a knowledge base of the native culture and history in my area. I can say confidently that I have learned a lot and can share my knowledge with my students and colleagues. I will also continue to learn all that I can about the resources in my area.</i>

	Workplace Host	Teacher Extern	Description of Project	Extern Quote
FS	Benton County Conservation, Vinton	Ann Conklin, Vinton Shellsburg CSD	Ann works with Benton County Conservation as a Naturalist Extern. She provides educational programs at parks, libraries, & learning centers throughout Benton County. You can see her in action at the Benton County Nature Center or experience a storybook walk during Firefly Festival on Sat., July 19.	<i>It's been really supportive and I'd recommend Benton Co Conservation to anyone considering a job or externship. I am hopeful to see the Naturalists' relationships with HS and MS teachers flourish as a result of the connections and plans I've been able to help get started.</i>
FS	Polk County Conservation, Des Moines	Rose Davila-Gay, Ankeny CSD	Rose worked at Polk County Conservation Sleepy Hollow site. The SnowFlex hill was used to design phenomenon-based lesson plans for a variety of physics and biology/Earth science concepts. Rose used various resources to learn the intricacies of the system, including the materials used, the angle of the incline, the water misting and water reclamation systems and the bioswale used to clean and return excess water to the river. Rose also designed an interactive model of how the SnowFlex hill's water system works, to educate the public on the hill's water conservation system.	<i>I think the ability to communicate with the public is an essential skill that employees everywhere need. One of the biggest things they look for at Sleepy Hollow is friendliness and personable. It makes the experience that much better if you can have a positive interaction with the staff!</i>
FS	Page County Landfill, Clarinda	Daniel DeGroot, Red Oak CSD	The Page County Landfill Association hosted Daniel DeGroot. He had the opportunity to work in a variety of landfill operations including recycling, maintenance, water reclamation, and landfill cell operations. The position allowed him to see the realities of recycling, including the costs and work involved associated with recycling programs. Additional experiences included seeing the amount of material waste and wide variety of items that end up in the garbage that a landfill must deal with including household garbage, manufacturing, construction, demolition and hazardous materials.	<i>Landfills deal with and are the destination of so many problems of a wasteful 21st Century society.</i>
FS	Indian Creek Nature Center, Cedar Rapids	Erica Dodge, Linn Mar CSD	Erica joined the team at Indian Creek Nature Center (ICNC) serving her second Summer Externship. Like last year she has the privilege to help with the ongoing efforts of the Butterfly Survey and is providing assistance again for this summer's Monarch Festival on July 12th. This year she expanded her reach with spreading environmental education to the trails with the help of her fellow extern Cassie Bowdre. She has helped with planting of trees and shrubs and continued to work with the land team. She helped out with the occasional summer camp and ventured to Etzel Sugar Grove Farm to help with a variety of farm chores.	<i>I just love working at Indian Creek. It is fun being out in nature and helping people connect with it.</i>
FS	Marshall County Conservation, Marshalltown	Angie Dudley, GMG CSD	Angie assisted the Marshall County Conservation Board with a variety of projects. She created monthly rotating kiosks that share pertinent information for park visitors. This included topics such as: Iowa Hawk Watch, Bats of Iowa, History and Use of Snowshoes, and Monarch Migration across Iowa. She also used a GPS tagging system and hiked the many trails with pictures. A GPS company will insert posts to help hikers know where they are. Angie assisted the MCCB with social media community outreach, educational bathroom signage, restrung fishing poles, Lego People in the Park, and removed invasive species.	<i>I was hesitant to take on an externship as that is our opportunity to recharge and regroup for the upcoming school year. However, after externing at Marshall County Conservation, I was pleasantly surprised to feel more rejuvenated! Working in a new field and lending my own expertise and talents helped me feel impactful. I learned SO MUCH.</i>
FS	USACE, Lake Red Rock Knoxville	Josh Ellis, Pella CSD	Working with the US Army Corps of Engineers at Lake Red Rock, Josh facilitated a project to assemble and strategically place fish habitat structures across the reservoir. Josh was able to take the lead on developing a deployment plan, which details the locations and procedure to put the structures into the water. Josh then was able to work with the president of the Red Rock Lake Association to develop maps and arrangements of the structures. To conclude the externship, multiple volunteer events were conducted to put the habitat structures into the water and then marked on a publicly shared map.	<i>The biggest takeaway this week is how much of a group effort this project requires. When we talk to our students about collaboration being a key skill in the world outside of school, this is exactly what we are talking about!</i>
FS	Climax Molybdenum / Lee County, Montrose	Kristen Finney, Keokuk CSD	Kristen is with Lee County Conservation in Montrose, Iowa, where she is assisting with environmental education programs for local youth. As part of her work, she is helping organize a fall field trip for 7th-grade students in Lee County, which includes water testing from the Mississippi River and learning more about the importance of mussels in the Mississippi River and how mussels affect the water quality. She is also supporting various youth camps held in Lee County parks, helping students connect with nature through hands-on outdoor activities.	<i>I can't believe my externship is over this week at Lee County Conservation. It has been an amazing experience! I have enjoyed making connections with people who work here and working alongside our naturalists</i>
FS	City of Des Moines Forestry, Des Moines	Ben DeFord, Des Moines Christian	During Ben's time with Des Moines Forestry, he used Treekeeper 8, an online record-keeping software utilized by many cities, to view and edit information about the tree canopy in the city of Des Moines. This software allows the city to maintain copious records about green assets, as well as plan for the future. Ben also had the opportunity to tour various locations, such as tree providers, to witness how trees are grown and procured. His externship experience gave him hands-on examples that he can take back into his classroom and share with his students this fall.	<i>I have always found life science to be intrinsically fascinating, but one of the challenges to teaching all students is making the content relevant to those who do not. Being able to explain exactly how the content that I teach connects with many areas of students' lives--from caring for their own yards to making considerations about public policy--will help me make my instruction stick.</i>

	Workplace Host	Teacher Extern	Description of Project	Extern Quote
FS	Clinton County Conservation, Grand Mound	Amanda Fowler, Northeast CSD	Amanda worked with the naturalists of Clinton County Conservation. The majority of her time was spent assisting with summer camps for students in grades kindergarten through fifth grade. She also generated user friendly forms for camp registration and rental forms for the new mobile learning center. The naturalists have a wealth of knowledge about the wildlife and plant life in and near the Mississippi River for which Amanda will be using this information in her classroom this fall.	<i>Students have been engaged in planning and managing a prairie on our school grounds. I would like to start a science club for students to continue the previous work. Students would be engaged in maintaining the native plants, pulling nonnative plants, planting more native plants, and lopping trees.</i>
FS	Effigy Mounds National Monument, Harpers Ferry	Anne Friederich, Postville CSD	Anne worked as part of the Biological Technician staff team, assisting with various duties within the field, such as removing invasive plants and identifying native prairie plants. She also worked with the Interpretive staff to review the newly revised Junior Scientist booklet for the Heartland Network and to plan and implement a Junior Scientist Day. This position required that Anne become familiar with various areas and trails within Effigy Mounds, as well as examining, researching, and creating educational materials related to the different Junior Scientist Day components.	<i>I have made some connections that I would like to maintain for my classroom and/or other classes at my school. The history and culture that you can learn about here isn't expanded upon in the typical school textbook and it is extremely important to have greater understanding during this tenuous time in our country.</i>
FS	Iowa DNR, George Wyth State Park, Waterloo	Aaron Gibney, St. Patrick's, Cedar Falls	Aaron spent time working with the George Wyth State Park. Aaron helped the staff with park maintenance and communication with the public about what the park was about. This helped Aaron learn about the park as well as how to convey information to others. Aaron also put up a Mason Bee house hoping to get some pollinating Mason Bees. To explain these bees, he made a brochure explaining with flowers and plants would best attract these Mason Bees to pollinate best.	<i>Communication is key between staff. If the staff is maintaining the park and the campgrounds, they communicate to each other what they need to do or what they've seen at the park.</i>
FS	USACE, Pleasant Valley	Lindsey Gosse, Pleasant Valley CSD	Lindsey worked with the forestry crew at the US Army Corps of Engineers. She spent part of her time in the field with the foresters, taking inventory of trees on various plots. She also learned a plethora about the importance of the trees in these specific areas and why they are doing such in-depth research to learn how to manage the areas best. The other part of her time, she spent analyzing data and trying to help assist in the management planning phase.	<i>I had no idea anyone even paid attention to trees dying off from major floods, much less collecting data and analyzing it to come up with a management plan. The craziest part to me, is that the foresters are working for an outcome they might not even be around to see in the future, but their work right now is so imperative regardless.</i>
FS	Buchanan County Conservation, Hazelton	Bethany Hadley, Oelwein CSD	Bethany is collaborating with the Naturalists at Buchanan County Parks to support a variety of educational and outreach efforts. Her responsibilities include assisting with day camps and programs at local libraries, guiding summer school groups, and welcoming visitors to the nature center at Fontana Park. In addition to her hands-on work with the public, Bethany is actively contributing to the park's communications by taking photos for promotional use and helping update the park's website and other digital tools.	<i>I think anytime we can engage students, it helps make the learning stick and these lessons are certainly engaging. Plus, it connects them with their world which can help give them a sense of well-being and purpose increasing their social-emotional well-being. I am so excited to take all of this knowledge back to my school this year.</i>
FS	Muscatine County Conservation, Muscatine	Michelle Haller, Muscatine CSD	Michelle worked with Muscatine County Conservation. During her time with them, she helped to facilitate education programs and student summer camps. She assisted with the daily activities of the Discovery Center, including animal care and public interactions. While with them, she observed the importance of 21st century workplace skills, especially communication, collaboration, and problem solving. It is her desire to gain knowledge and build relationships that she can utilize with future students.	<i>One valuable aspect to this externship has been the connections I have made. I will use these connections to help me create experiences for my classroom students and school-wide experiences. These experiences will help to excite the students and create a foundation for future learning.</i>
FS	Sac County Conservation, Sac City	Kaylene Johnson, Ridge View CSD	Kaylene worked with the naturalist to plan, prepare, and execute summer camp programs. She participated in animal care and feeding of all the center's reptiles. Kaylene also led a variety of activities in addition to the summer camps including library programs, night hikes, kayaking trips, and overnight camp which included fire started and outdoor cooking.	<i>We actually spent way more time on the mapping than originally planned because the kids were really into drafting and revising their maps to make them the most accurate that they could. They were so proud of their work!</i>
FS	Finkbine Golf Course, Iowa City	Kyle Hurt, Iowa City CSD	Kyle worked as a member of the Grounds Crew at Finkbine Golf Course, with a focus on agronomy and water management. His contributions included collecting and analyzing data related to the course's irrigation needs, which he compared with daily weather data to identify trends and optimize watering practices. He also assisted in developing a system for long-term data monitoring to support more efficient and sustainable water usage across the course.	<i>Studying water and growth of greens has given me a perspective on lots of different aspects of agronomy. It's also allowed me to create useful contacts that can come into my classroom and discuss ideas with my students, giving them real world, perspective, and connections.</i>
FS	USACE, Thomson Causeway, Thomson, IL	Michael Jensen, Clinton CSD	Mike worked for the US Army Corps of Engineers. Mike was tasked with working with the park rangers on ways to better promote and utilize the hiking trail system while still being mindful of nature and the importance of conservation. Some of the tasks include creating more accurate and interactive trail maps, creating and installing new trail signage and installing/repairing benches and tables and plant management. In addition to making the trails more appealing to campers Mike worked on ways to promote the trails. Getting more people to come into the park was a priority for Mike while he worked at the Causeway.	<i>Teaching students to identify the best tool to complete a given project and to then use it safely is a big part of this work. One of the first questions the Rangers ask when hiring summer help is, what types of tools and equipment are you familiar with?</i>

	Workplace Host	Teacher Extern	Description of Project	Extern Quote
FS	USACE, Saylorville, Polk City	Lindsay Kasuga, West Des Moines CSD	Working at Saylorville Lake allowed Lindsay to experience the wide array of tasks and responsibilities performed by the park rangers. Lindsay completed a sign inventory using GPS technology; the data collected will be used to maintain the numerous signs necessary to successfully manage this dam and surrounding recreation area. Lindsay also worked with park managers to collect data necessary for monitoring the condition of the dam, as well as participate in several wildlife and forestry management. Working with the public; Lindsay created and presented several lessons for the Junior Ranger program available at Saylorville Lake.	<i>It was interesting to see how technology advances allow for more accurate monitoring of the dam. This data is then sent to the geotech department for further analysis. Another well that is installed allows scientists to measure the how much, if at all, the slope creeps on the various support structure of the dam.</i>
FS	Dickinson County Conservation Okoboji	Pennie Klepper, North Union CSD	During her externship at the Dickinson County Nature Center, Pennie worked alongside the educational director, naturalist, and an intern to help plan fun and engaging summer camp activities, including a novel study for one of the nature camps that connected reading with nature exploration. She also had the chance to work with a naturalist outside of Dickinson County, which allowed her to see how naturalists from different areas approach their work. One of her favorite parts of the experience was helping take care of Monarch caterpillars, where she monitored their growth and learned about their life cycle.	<i>My biggest takeaway was integrating nature, reading, and science all in one unit. I can't wait to teach the students this unit this fall and take part in the field trips, so excited!</i>
FS	City of Ames	George LaCava, Ballard CSD	George worked on community outreach and education for the City of Ames Sustainability Coordinator. He coordinated with Sustainability Offices from surrounding cities to help develop an outreach and incentive program to drive multifamily dwelling owners towards energy efficiency. George also designed signage for placement along walking paths in the city parks to raise awareness about city recycling programs, co-hosted a community learning event with the ISU Extension master gardeners to teach people how to upcycle wooden pallets into planter boxes, and wrote articles about electric yard tools for the Ames CitySide newsletter.	<i>I consider myself a fairly well engaged citizen, but I have learned that I am not! There are so many aspects of the city's sustainability program that I was not aware of.</i>
FS	Poweshiek County Conservation, Montezuma	Reagan Mackie, Grinnell CSD	During Reagan's time with Poweshiek County Conservation, she helped prepare and lead several different types of programs. This ranged from programs for children (preschoolers through middle schoolers), adults, and retired people. She taught educational lessons focused on different aspects of nature and the environment, taught safety lessons prior to kayaking, and planned for other various educational experiences.	<i>One thing that changed in my teaching after my last Externship was showing the connection between what I was teaching and the real world. Through my experiences in Externship, I was able to demonstrate some real-life connections to different jobs.</i>
FS	Muscatine County Conservation, Muscatine	Laura McDonald, Muscatine CSD	Laura worked with Naturalists of Muscatine County Conservation in the Environmental Learning Center. She helped to plan and implement lessons for all of the summer camps held at the Center, as well as research and conduct enrichment activities for most of the educational animals at the center. As part of her research duties, Laura helped the ELC create a Geology exhibit along with a Monarch Butterfly exhibit. This position required collaboration with the MCC Naturalists, data collection, research, and teaching both children and adults.	<i>It feels good to be trusted with responsibility and work with the public on behalf of the Environmental Learning Center.</i>
FS	ReEvolution Farm Dubuque	Stephanie Monahan, Dubuque CSD	During Steph's time at ReEvolution Farms she planted & harvested several vegetables & herbs, planted hundreds of prairie plugs, set up irrigation systems, performed mite checks on the chickens, & weeded several gardens. In addition to working on the farm, Steph cleaned eggs & harvested varieties of hydroponic lettuce purchased by local restaurants. Steph also learned how to seed lettuce trays, load the hydroponic trays with newly sprouted lettuce plants, clean the hydroponic trays, and helped her host prepare for summer markets by packaging several types of produce.	<i>I feel like I'm told everyday how grateful she is that I am there. I'm learning new things and I'm truly helping a great human...what could be more impactful than that?</i>
FS	Iowa DNR, Decorah Fish Hatchery	Emily Neal, Postville CSD	During her externship this summer, Neal will expand upon the programming she created last summer to increase engagement at the Decorah Fish Hatchery. Neal will make a series of outdoor interactive scavenger hunts. Hunts will include information about the Fish Hatchery and the surrounding natural area of the Driftless. Events will be held monthly during the summer, where visitors to the Hatchery can participate in new missions and adventures. Neal created special addition hunts for birthday parties, social events, school groups, daycare centers, and an ongoing Goosechase.	<i>This has really solidified how important it is for students to have good design skills, for even in STEM fields you are often trying to communicate your work with a public audience.</i>

	Workplace Host	Teacher Extern	Description of Project	Extern Quote
FS	Iowa DNR, Big Marsh, Parkersburg	Karly Nederhoff, CAL CSD	Karly's time at the Iowa DNR Big Marsh Wildlife Management was spent working on several wildlife management projects. She assisted with transporting farm equipment used for planting food plots, sprayed herbicides to manage invasive plants, and maintained local wildlife habitats. She also took part in banding geese, morning doves, and wood ducks. In addition to mechanical, electrical, and chemical science skills, employees at the host site need to utilize problem solving, critical thinking, and collaboration skills within their daily work.	<i>At the DNR Big Marsh, I was able to 'feel' like a student again, going through learning processes with unfamiliar tasks and finding various ways to work through a given problem. It gave me an opportunity to reflect on my own teaching practices, and I hope to use what I learned to continue to challenge my own students with productive struggle.</i>
FS	Iowa DNR, Prairie Resource Center, Lehigh	Jordan Omgig, Eagle Grove CSD	Jordan is working on several projects as part of the DNR Wildlife and Prairie Restoration at Brushy Creek. She has taken part in planting native plants into plots, harvested seed from prior planted plants, and has also helped with weed control. She has researched spotted plants around the state to update a plant database for future collection, and also went to different remnant fields around the state to collect more seeds.	<i>I think the thing that I am finding the most interesting through this whole process is just how much planning, organizing, researching, and data tracking goes into keeping Iowa's native plants alive in prairies across the state.</i>
FS	Cass County Conservation, Lewis	Amy Parker, AHSTW CSD	Amy was with Cass County Conservation to support and enhance programming for youth. She helped facilitate and evaluate the county's summer camps, providing insights into student engagement, instructional quality, and alignment with science education best practices. By offering a teacher's perspective, she helped ensure that hands-on, nature-based learning experiences are both impactful and developmentally appropriate for area youth. Amy conducted a review of the new Iowa Science Standards and how current conservation programs align.	<i>One of the things I've always appreciated about living in small-town Iowa is the deep sense of community. This experience has reinforced my belief that we're all part of a larger village that cares about our students and wants to see them thrive. Whether its through conservation programming, hands-on outdoor learning, or simply offering new perspectives, everyone I've worked with has shown a genuine investment in helping students succeed.</i>
FS	Winneshiek County Conservation, Fort Atkinson	Brenna Ramstad, South Winneshiek CSD	Brenna worked alongside the Winneshiek County Conservation Board's Education and Outreach Coordinator to support the environmental education of the youth of the area. She created active and passive programs for the public to participate in at various parks and events. The majority of this experience was done through nature-based summer camps for students ages first through ninth grade. Brenna regularly used collaboration, communication and creativity along with technology and learning standards to make these programs successful.	<i>I definitely made some friends for life this summer and I look forward to continuing our work together as I implement my project with my students.</i>
FS	USACE Coralville	Shanti Sellz, Iowa City CSD	Shanti worked with the Army Corps of Engineers at the Coralville Reservoir on land management and invasive species removal. The Army Corps manages large tracts of land that are heavily used by the public. Shanti's work this summer consists of land and trail work to improve the land and outdoor experience for everyone.	<i>Sometimes in the day-to-day of teaching it can be tempting to give a worksheet or reinforcement assignment to make the time go by, but I am constantly reminded of the need to keep my lessons active, creative, and relevant.</i>
FS	Jones County Conservation, Center Junction	Dylan Shaffer, Monticello CSD	This summer Dylan worked alongside naturalists at Jones County Conservation Board. During his externship Dylan supported naturalists by providing educational opportunities at various sites and organization. Dylan also spent time creating phenomenon-based learning activities to help educate students and the public on local phenomenon in Jones County, some of the topics covered were local water quality, biodiversity, and geological phenomenon.	<i>I learned so much about endangered plants and animals during these events and got to get hands on doing some citizen science. I am very excited to bring what I learned back into my classroom and encourage learning and growth for my students this coming year.</i>
FS	Buchanan County Conservation Hazelton	Larry Shonk Isaac Newton Christian Academy	Larry is working at Fontana Park. He worked with the naturalists Sondra Cabell and Michael Maas to prepare and lead activities for the multiple summer camps the Nature Center puts on for local youth. Additionally, he was involved with individual programs in the community and neighboring counties including "Creature Features" in local libraries, and a raptor interaction in Manchester.	<i>I have learned a new answer to the question "when are we ever going to use this?" The new answer is "you never know, but when it is called for you'll be glad you know it." We really don't know what we don't know, we really can't tell a student exactly when, how, and where this knowledge will be required of them.</i>
FS	Iowa DNR Sweet Marsh, Sumner	Sean Singewald, Postville CSD	Sean worked with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Team at Sweet Marsh Wildlife Management Area. During his time with the DNR, he participated in habitat improvement projects, creation of winter thermal cover, songbird capture and tracking, as well as goose banding and endangered species studies.	<i>There is a large amount of shared science resources out there, I just don't know what they are. Being exposed to people who are really doing science has helped me discover some of these.</i>
FS	Iowa DNR Sweet Marsh, Sumner	Andrea Sullivan, Nashua Plainfield CSD	Andrea worked at the Sweet Marsh location with DNR Wildlife Management staff. During the summer Andrea was involved in a variety of projects to prepare water fowl food plots to provide hunting habitat as well as waterfowl refuge areas that allow for research and data collection on duck, goose, and other migratory bird populations. She was also able to participate in song bird tracking, goose and mourning dove banding, and many other daily tasks that help maintain the thousands of acres managed by the DNR staff based at the Sweet Marsh office.	<i>A lot of conversations about what they are seeing as they study native populations have brought up scenarios, I can tie into classroom conversations to help make these topics more relevant to students. Wildebeest migration is an ok storyline, but ducks and geese will grab the attention of the students that would rather be out hunting than sitting in a classroom.</i>

	Workplace Host	Teacher Extern	Description of Project	Extern Quote
FS	Mahaska County Conservation, Oskaloosa	Stephanie Visser, Oskaloosa CSD	Stephanie worked with the Soil Water Conservation District and Green Iowa Americorp on a Native Landscaping project in Oskaloosa. Hardy plants with deep roots improve infiltration of rainwater and attract song birds and butterflies. The plantings also double as a pollinator garden. The next phase in the project will be educating people on the importance of planting pollinator species. It will further lead into a water quality project that captures all the water runoff from the Environmental Learning Center into a wetland which reduces nitrates in the water.	<i>It has been a privilege to be a part of so many different aspects of conservation as well as the learning opportunities that I have had that will be taken back to my classroom.</i>

Laboratory Science Descriptions

	Workplace Host	Teacher Extern	Description of Project	Extern Quote
LS	Corteva Agriscience, Johnston	Brandy Borg, West Des Moines CSD	Brandy's time at Corteva was primarily spent in the biotechnology department. She was involved with working on plants that have had genetic engineering on them in order to resist problems for the plant. Brandy used multiple scientific tools and practices to perform the steps necessary to help grow plants that can be used for research. She was also introduced to many different employees of the building and learned about the company's framework and purpose for farming.	<i>Each person is at their own level of work/ development here. Everyone has their own experiments and tasks that they are performing that contribute to the big picture. I think its pretty interesting how such a large company has so many niches that are being developed by specialists in that area.</i>
LS	ISU Extension and Outreach, Ames	Brooke Finney, Bondurant-Farrar CSD	During Brooke’s time partnering with Iowa State Extension, she teamed alongside an Agricultural Climatology Specialist to create a standards aligned atmospheric science course for 8-12 science teachers. She explored different resources for teachers and had the opportunity to take a closer look into Iowa State’s research facilities. This position allowed Brooke to collaborate with a professional in climate and worked towards creating a project-based learning project that educators can implement in the classroom.	<i>Anytime we can engage students in real world experiences and connections, we are allowing students to explore in a way that will greatly help them for their future, no matter their age.</i>
LS	Bayer Crop Science, Muscatine	Andrea LaPage, Wilton CSD	During Andrea's time at Bayer Chemical Plant, she primarily worked in the Environmental Lab. The Environmental Lab is responsible for tracking the waste treatment process at Bayer. This is to ensure that dangerous chemicals are not being dumped into Iowa's rivers. Her work in the lab focused on testing Nitrates and Nitrites in water. This work will assist Bayer in integrating these tests on a day-to-day basis.	<i>I felt like I was in charge of the work that I was doing and I felt that I was trusted with that work as well. They treated me like an equal there. I also feel like I am doing good work when I am there. There is nothing more important for Iowa right now than water quality and doing that work for a company that directly affects Iowa makes me feel like I'm helping out.</i>
LS	Kemin Industries, Des Moines	Cat Lucht, science teacher at Winterset CSD	During Cat Lucht’s time at KEMIN Industries, she worked with the Specialty Crop Improvement group working on developing a new extraction process. She utilized various analytical techniques to determine the concentration of molecules of interest. This position required Cat to use technology to analyze the data to optimize the process steps.	<i>It is easy to forget in our day-to-day lives all of the research and time that goes into developing the products that we use daily! Especially as companies work to become more sustainable, they are required to find new methods to create the same products we love.</i>

Other Descriptions

	Workplace Host	Teacher Extern	Description of Project	Extern Quote
O	Iowa Library for the Blind and Print Disabled, Des Moines	Shelby Bee, West Des Moines, CSD	Shelby has helped with the needs of patrons of all ages: finding materials they may be interested in, helping to create resources for the summer program with students from kindergarten to high school, and offering support during STEM activities with students in the LEAP program. Shelby has only dipped her toes into a few of the programs and looks forward to continuing to learn and support where she can.	<i>The main things they focus on are relating to how people can learn to live with their blindness and not just rely on the little sight they may have at the time.</i>
O	Stanley Center for Peace and Security, Muscatine	Maria Sneath, Muscatine CSD	Maria worked as part of the outreach efforts through the Global Education programming of the Stanley Center for Peace and Security. She organized, participated in, and led a variety of educational activities centered around themes of sustainability and cultural competence. These activities served summer school students from kindergarten through 8th grade and included building tours, LEGO engineering lessons, Earth Balloon activities, cultural ambassador programs, and culture kit lessons.	<i>While formal training, like a Civil Engineering degree, is fundamental, the success of a complex project like a self-sustaining building ultimately hinges on experts' ability to work together and communicate effectively.</i>
O	HNI Corporation, Muscatine	Elise Weigel, Muscatine CSD	Elise completed her third externship with HNI this summer, joining the Learning and Development team after spending the past two years exploring roles within the company's marketing teams. This year, she contributed to initiatives focused on identifying organizational needs and delivering targeted training programs. Her work supported internal education efforts around presentation skills, leveraging individual strengths, and leadership development.	<i>Many of my students know that they want to go into business, but are unsure how to go about it. I was able to tell my students all the different routes of how the business professionals got to their positions at HNI. This helped to reduce the pressure on them to choose the perfect path because there is no perfect path.</i>