

## Reine Saint Amour: The Marketing & Communications Intern Experience

My experience as a marketing and communications intern with the Swedish American Museum has been an incredible learning experience. I have always wanted to work in museums, but my recent work experiences and passions have gravitated toward marketing and photography. A marketing internship opportunity at the Swedish American Museum was a perfect fit. As a senior at DePaul University pursuing a double major in Art History and Anthropology, I have been eager to gain practical professional museum experience. With my interests in photography and some limited marketing experience from working with my sorority and at DePaul, I felt that this opportunity not only matched my background but also allowed me to contribute to a museum setting in a meaningful way. I started working under JJ, the Swedish American Museum's Communications Manager, in late July 2024, and now, in September with a few weeks left in my internship, I have significantly expanded my skill set. Assignments ranging from developing promotional materials to photographing exhibits and events, have expanded my skill sets and solidified my intent to pursue a career in the museum field

JJ allowed me to focus on areas where I wanted to gain experience and strengthen my abilities, such as creating promotional materials and photographing in a museum setting. I've had the opportunity to comprehensively photograph the Museum's exterior, exhibits, Store products, and more. I've also honed my photo editing skills in both Adobe Lightroom and Photoshop, learning extensively about importing, editing, and sharing photos for promotional use.

Additionally, I've worked on promotional materials for various Museum events. I started this summer, and I quickly learned that the holiday season was already bringing a surge of planning activity for the Museum. Whether it was for the annual Julmarknad (Christmas market) or the Herring Breakfast, I gained insight not only into the cultural significance of these events but also the detailed planning and marketing efforts required to promote them in a city like Chicago. From updating graphics for the website to creating flyers for local businesses and posters to hang outside the Museum, I've seen the tangible impact of my work—whether it's walking down Andersonville's streets and seeing my designs or hearing that an event's almost sold out.

I was genuinely surprised by how much I still had to learn about Chicago's communities. Even though it was my fourth year living in Chicago, I did not realize how much I had missed, especially in terms of the unique demographics, businesses,

and cultural vibes of each neighborhood. Andersonville, in particular, really caught me off guard. I had only visited a couple of times for their Midsommarfest, but I had spent little time exploring. Now, after just a few months, I've really fallen in love with this community—the quirky stores, small businesses and the people who make Andersonville so special.

Many of them volunteer at the Museum, dedicating their time and energy to keep the Museum a destination for residents and tourists alike. The volunteers are such an important part of both the Museum and the neighborhood's identity. What's been even more special is getting to know some of the long-time Andersonville residents. It's easy to see why people are so passionate about this place—the Swedish American Museum is more than just an institution. It's a cornerstone of the community, blending Swedish and American cultures in a way that feels really authentic and connected.

What I've enjoyed most about this internship is the close-knit, interpersonal nature of the Swedish American Museum's staff. Building relationships and immersing myself in the Museum's community has given me invaluable insight into pursuing a career in museum studies. As someone interested in graduate school and a career in a cultural institution, it's been incredibly helpful to learn from the staff here. As I prepare to graduate DePaul University and to consider my future academic and career choices, I truly appreciate all the advice on graduate programs, career paths, and the experiences that have led many of the staff members to their current roles.