My internship at the City of Fort Collins Safety, Security, and Risk Management (SSRM) was a very rewarding experience. The most enjoyable part about my time with the City was being able to work with such a wonderful group of people. Not only were my coworkers incredibly supportive, they were also very keen on keeping me engaged and making sure that I was always learning. From very early on into the internship, I was attending meetings, discussing safety matters with other employees, and writing safety policies, plans, and procedures. I enjoyed the broad scope of work that I was involved in: from learning about hazardous material management plans one minute to researching active shooter procedures the next. The bewilderment of not knowing what I’d encounter or experience on any given day was the primary reason I always looked forward to going to the office.

Working for a large, multidisciplinary organization like the City of Fort Collins is great for any student who wants to learn and experience a diverse range of Environmental Health & Safety (EH&S) topics. At the start of my internship, I was responsible for reviewing employee loss data and injury statistics and drafting a comprehensive 3-Year Strategic Safety Plan for preventing such injuries in the future. Shortly thereafter I was assigned to develop a list of driver safety training options for City employees and with writing a safety policy around drone use for Cable 14, the City’s news station. Closer to the end of my internship, I was involved in researching severe weather applications for widespread use, organizing information related to the City’s security inventory, and developing individualized Emergency Response Plans (ERPs) for City facilities in accordance with federally-mandated Hazardous Materials Management Plans (HMMPs). When I wasn’t working on designated projects, I was fortunate enough to shadow an employee from Environmental & Regulatory Affairs, who taught me about the tenements of the City’s municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) permit, conduct slip-resistance testing of flooring materials, attend site audits of various buildings, and participate in fun office get-togethers.

From my own personal experience, I can truthfully say that any student would be extremely fortunate to land a job with the City of Fort Collins. As an intern, not only do you feel like you’re making a difference through the assignments that you’re given and activities that you participate in, but you’ll also learn a thing or two about being a professional through the meaningful feedback and support that you’ll receive along the way. This internship is, without a doubt, second to none.