This summer I had the pleasure of interning at Encana in the EH&S department. I was part of the Industrial Hygiene team and my project was to conduct an IH assessment of worker exposure during tank gauging. The first step in my project was to write a sampling plan and learn how to use some of the IH instruments. I was then tasked with traveling to Mississippi to conduct the assessment and gather data for my report and presentation. It was great to get out of the office and spend time in the field learning about oil and gas production, as well as hands on IH. Most of the sampling I conducted for my project was air monitoring, both for workers and the surrounding environment. I then took all of the data I gathered in the field and learned how to send the samples to accredited labs for analysis. Once the results had returned from the labs, I learned how to perform IH specific statistics on the data sets. This allowed me to come up with recommendations and next steps to communicate in my final presentation. I also wrote a report that outlined my project and the results I generated. The great thing about my project at Encana was that it made a big contribution to the company and my recommendations were actually implemented in Mississippi.

Apart from my project I learned a lot about the oil and gas industry, field safety, and EH&S in general. As an intern we had weekly lunch and learns that expanded our knowledge of the different processes within oil and gas. I also spent some time with Encana’s field safety advisors learning about general field safety. While in the field I also learned how to conduct silica sampling and toured a frack site. In addition, I received two full days of comprehensive EH&S training, which included silica awareness, lock out tag out, fall protection, hot work and confined space. The internship program also connected me with fellow interns through a Rockies game, community service event and various after work socials.

Overall the internship I had with Encana was an exceptional learning experience, both academically and professionally. It expanded on the EH curriculum I had learned at school and gave me a real glimpse into the working world. Encana’s internship program is well established and I would highly recommend it to anyone who wants a rewarding summer. It provided opportunities to work on meaningful projects and be surrounded by coworkers who are eager to help you learn.