

Jake Rodgers

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PICS Virtual Summer Internship 2020

This summer, I was given the opportunity to work with DREAM Charter School in East Harlem, New York. Initially, I was prepared to begin on June 1st, working with DREAM to support their annual Gala, but obviously the Covid pandemic had other plans. Instead, I began this experience at home in Culver, Indiana, going head first into a professional setting with no prior knowledge and a week of virtual orientation.

I could not have asked for a better supervisor and organization to be a part of. Right away, Colleen did not hesitate to allow me a glimpse into Major Gifts. My initial task was to read and analyze major donor's responses to the Covid pandemic, and present ideas on what would be the most effective way to ensure funding for the school and summer programs. In our uncertain times, I was also asked to explore how other organizations were fundraising in a virtual setting. On a daily basis, I would engage with DREAM's REAL kids program, collecting videos, pictures, and quotes to share with donors in our weekly newsletters. Occasionally, I would be in contact with new donors, introducing myself, the organization, and getting basic information to better cater our solicitation efforts.

Overall, my work with DREAM culminated with our end of summer celebration, using the photographs, videos, and quotes to thank our donors for their sponsorship this summer, as well as using my donor research to help advise and specialize solicitation strategies going forward in this virtual world and fluid economic climate.