**When:** May-September  
**Where:** Seattle, WA  
**What:** Environmental Conservation Internship at the City of Bellevue, WA & Behavioral Economics Research Intern at reVit!

This summer began with an amazing road trip across the United States and Canada, which included stops at Theodore Roosevelt and Yellowstone National Parks. We arrived in Seattle just in time for the start of my position at the City of Bellevue at the end of May. At the City of Bellevue, I was working as one of two Environmental Conservation and Outreach interns. We worked on larger projects in areas such as stormwater management and solid waste policy. Outreach was a major component of the internship as well. The city seeks to promote sustainable behavior through principles of community-based social marketing. This involved the development of materials and conducting outreach to citizens, including school-based programs, on topics such as reducing carbon emissions, increasing landfill waste diversion rates, practicing natural lawn and garden care, and reducing urban stormwater runoff pollution.

Having worked at a small non-profit with about 35 employees last summer, adjusting to the bureaucracy and scale of the City of Bellevue with over a thousand employees was a different experience. As a very independent worker, the job at the City of Bellevue certainly pushed me out of my comfort zone as I was executing the vast majority of these projects jointly with the other conservation intern in the department. It proved difficult at times with regard to efficiency. In that same vein, this was my first experience with a full-time 8-to-5 job. As someone who likes to work at a very variable pace, one I feel that Middlebury fosters, this constant pace felt as if it encourage inefficiency. For these reasons and many others, I was able to learn a lot about myself and my work preferences through my experience at the City of Bellevue.

Toward the beginning of the summer, I joined the team at reVit!, a start-up project out of the Middlebury Institute for International Studies in Monterey, CA which works to encourage the movement towards ecologically-sustainable plant-based diets. I worked part-time designing digital media tools and studying topics in behavioral economics and behavior design. This Fall, I will continue working with them to conduct research on food choice design aimed at helping people switch to plant-based foods. I found the team at reVit! to be very passionate about their work. Although the project is very new and has not yet officially launched, they are already fostering a culture I am excited to be a part of which encourages innovation and efficiency.

Working toward the goals of raising awareness and breaking down barriers to sustainable environmental practices by combining community-based social marketing at Bellevue and behavior design strategies at reVit! was a rewarding way to invest my time this summer. My job at the City of Bellevue provided me with the opportunity for significant skill building, a chance to work on pressing environmental challenges, and the financial means to spend my summer in Seattle. Meanwhile, my internship at reVit! allowed me to explore fields which I am highly passionate about: food sustainability and behavioral economics.

Though commitment to both internships demanded an often fast-paced work schedule, I feel that Middlebury has prepared me well for efficient workload management. I was able to balance these priorities with a fun-filled summer of exploring Seattle and the Pacific Northwest region. I
took advantage of every moment to go hiking and camping in the area and was rewarded with some of the most beautiful scenery and experiences of my life! I was afforded a lot of time for reflection on my summer as I once again road tripped, this time stopping in the Rocky Mountains, back across the country (two incredible experiences themselves!) Ultimately, my summer was a lovely combination of personal discovery, career exploration, and adventure.