TOLEDO, SPAIN

MADELINE HANSON

Program: UMN Internship and Spanish Language, Summer

Madeline’s Major: Kinesiology, Spanish

Academic Life: I took my classes at an institution called the Fundación de Ortega y Gasset, located about a five-minute walk from the city center. The internship I did also had a classroom component, where as a class we would talk about our experiences and also about cultural differences between the United States and Spain. My other class was another cultural class where we explored topics like familial structure and the fiestas in Spain. Both classes were interesting and enjoyable for me, especially because they were both taught by locals who were very passionate about the subject they were teaching.

Internship Experience: During my internship, I completed several projects for the volunteer office, many involving organizing volunteer files from surrounding areas into large folders and taking inventory of books and volunteer apparel and other gear. For me, the internship was one place where I practiced Spanish the most. The daily practice at the Cruz Roja was a few hours when I knew my mind had to change gears to solely Spanish. Speaking Spanish in a professional environment is very practical for me, as I chose Spanish with the intention of using it in my career. My experience at the Cruz Roja was a great introduction for me in that regard.

Advice to Someone Considering Toledo: I would say Toledo is the perfect spot to spend six weeks. The city is centrally located within Spain, making weekend trips to other Spanish cities easy. The city is also extremely culturally rich, with a history definitely worth exploring. Toledo is a small enough city that I felt like I got to know it well within the time I was there, and it was not too big that I felt as if I was overwhelmed with the size. I felt extremely safe walking the streets of Toledo.

“I feel more open to accepting new ideas or challenging the traditional way of doing daily activities.”

Madeline in front of the view of Toledo.