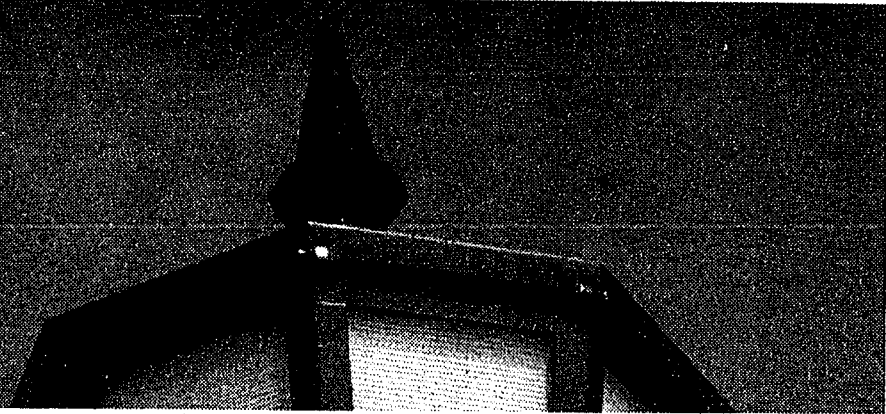


# news



## EXPERIENCE, Continued from Page 1

### STAFF

herald@meredith.edu

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beemanme@meredith.edu

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of all the offices I applied to, the only one I had been offered an internship in was Congressman Robin Hayes' office. Hayes represents the eighth district of North Carolina. I was very excited and could hardly wait to start working in their office for five weeks, but I would have to wait because I was scheduled to do my internship for the second summer session.

When I arrived at room 130 in the Cannon House Office Building, I was frightened and worried about if I was everything they thought I would be. Dwayne Carson, who would be my supervisor for the five weeks, was sitting at his desk, and I think was a little surprised to see that I had arrived early for the first day of my internship. He got me logged on to a computer and had me fill out an application to get my I.D. badge, which would allow me access in to the Capitol with a tour group or to run errands for the different staff members in the office. Around noon, a group of staffers from different offices, another intern, and I went to the Capitol for a Dome Tour. The Dome Tour was incredible. The view standing at the top of the rotunda and looking down was amazing. When I looked down from the top of the Rotunda, everyone on the floor of the Rotunda looked like little specks. Then when we went out on the outside of the Rotunda the view

was beautiful. At that moment, I determined that that was definitely the best view of Washington I had ever seen. You can see the entire city of Washington from up there. After the Dome Tour, they did not really have me start on anything too hard on the first day because as Carson put it, he "did not want to scare me away."

After the first day, I was excited to really take off with this internship and be given more responsibility, but as I found out in the days and weeks to follow, I would be given more responsibilities than I could have ever imagined. During the duration of my internship, I gave a total of five Capitol Tours, made five trips to the supply store for the staff, and took more trips than I could keep count of to Franking. I worked a lot of Data Entry for the Trade Show and wrote quite a few response letters. I worked on I.Q.; this is where all the e-mails come into and all the letters the office sends out to the constituents are stored. I saw a few hearings while I was there, some more exciting than others, and heard some great speakers at the intern lectures. I got to go through and file news articles from different newspapers across North Carolina where Congressman Hayes' name had been mentioned. I folded more letters than I have ever seen in my life.

Those five weeks were the most exciting of my summer, but it

was a real eye opener for me. The internship gave me a new look at our government. It really made me examine and question my party affiliation and if Washington is really the place for me. Something that has always bothered me about our government is why it has to take so long to get bills and house resolutions passed? Also, why does it have to take so long to send out answers to e-mails when all they do is send out a form letter and not a personal note or greeting? I never understood why Congressional people act the way they do when they know the media and public are always watching them and waiting for them to slip up. After paying careful attention and listening to everything everyone said, I can understand why the government is the way it is; the way the media portrays is not the way it really is. I think that Congress really needs to get off their pedestals and listen to not just the experts but the real individuals in the United States that they were elected by. If they were to do this, than they might actually be able to get something accomplished. Also, I think Congress, especially since it is an election year, should be trying to keep the public better informed about the decisions they are making in Washington and why they would benefit their district. But something that I learned quickly about Congress is that they depend

on the ignorance of their constituents, especially during an election year, so they can get reelected and pass what they want.

For college students, the great thing about Washington, D.C. is that your major in college or what your interests are both personally and professionally don't matter because you can most likely find these interests somewhere in The District (another name for Washington, D.C.). This is another reason people want to come to Washington, D.C. The people you get to meet, shake hands with, listen to, and learn from are some of the most incredible and moving people that you will ever meet in your life. The knowledge you gain while doing an internship in Washington is indescribable. Interning in Washington, D.C., whether it is for five weeks in the summer, the entire summer, or even for a semester during the school year, the internship is something you will never be able to forget. ■

## ask gigi

My name is Gigi, and my advice column is one of the new additions to the Meredith Herald this fall. Do you have personal questions that you need answered by someone who has the experience and the heart to help you? That's why I'm here. Feel free to write me and ask me about love and loves lost, roommate woes, academic stresses, family issues, employment aggravations, and much more. I will offer my best advice on a variety of topics—no subject is off-limits. You can contact me anytime at ask.gigi.herald@gmail.com.

Although I can only feature a limited number of letters per issue in the Herald, I promise to try my best to answer every email that comes my way. But because I'm also a student with a lot on my plate this semester, I hope you'll be patient with me—personal replies may not always be sent back in a timely fashion.

I look forward to hearing from you soon!

Yours Truly,  
Gigi

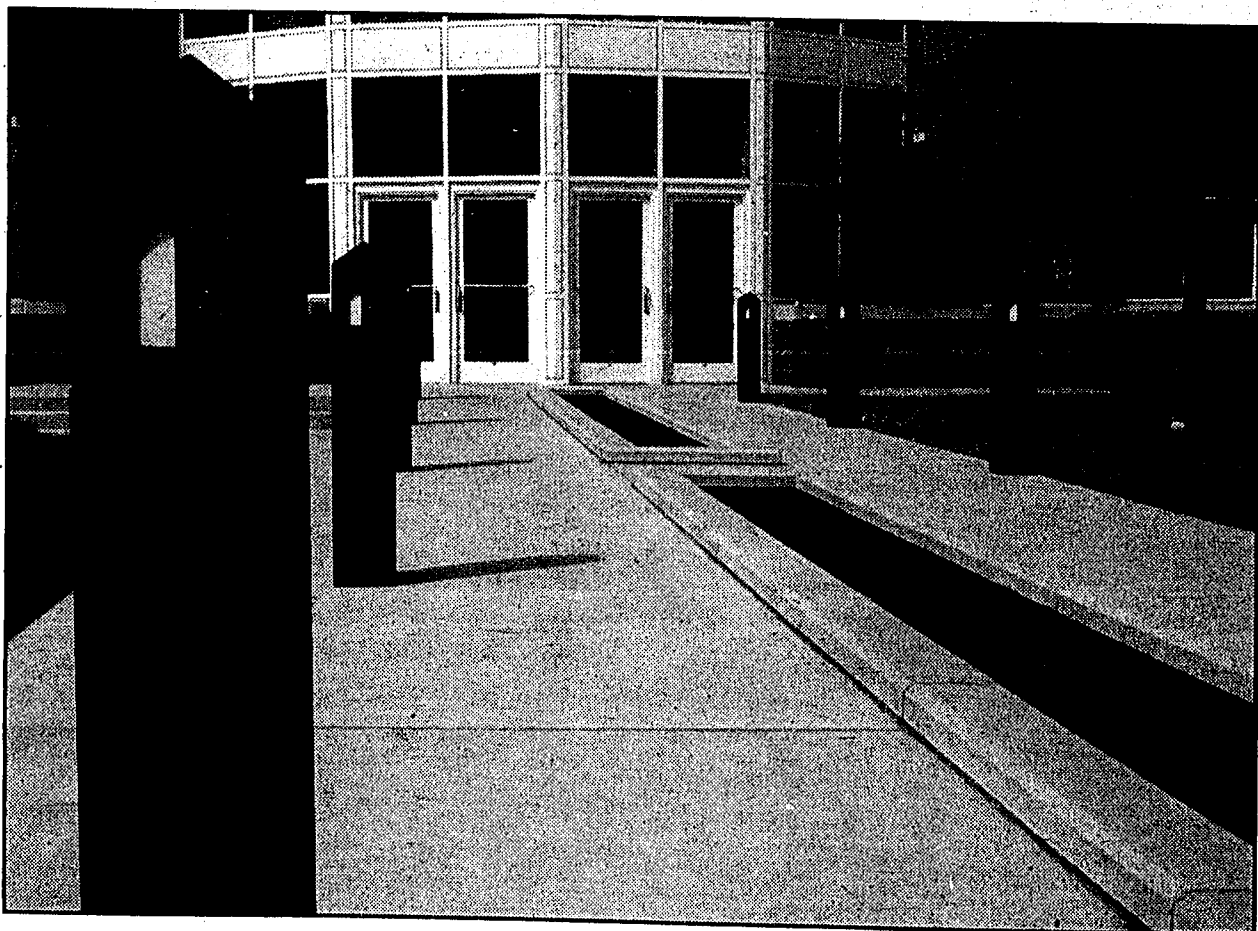


Photo by Kyra Young