



Sustainability

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Discovering passion and the tools of public service to make impact

THURSDAY, JANUARY 19, 2023

Sawyer Rogers '22

Sawyer Rogers '22 participated in the Durham arm of [Semester in the City](#) (Fall 2021 - SITC @ UNH) where he interned at the [UNH Institute on Disability](#). Sawyer still works for the Institute on Disability and is currently in the top ranked Atlantis Program, where he is pursuing a Master's in Public Administration at Syracuse University and will be at the Hertie School in Germany next year pursuing a Master's in Public Policy.

Sawyer was invited as the alumni speaker for the Fall 2022 Showcase, Semester in the City's graduation. Below is a transcript of his speech, containing his reflections and advice for the recently graduated class.

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Hello all. It's my honor to welcome you to the SITC alumni community!



SITC grows you. This program is unique in how it places you in a variety of environments, your internship site, your cohort, Boston, and your home university. This ensures that your growth will happen and do so in an interconnected way.

I am also so excited to see the multi-environmental growth model of SITC expanding. The SITC @ UNH program I was a part of is evolving into Semester for Impact, launching in spring 2024, which will allow undergraduate students from across the country to take part in the SITC model at their home colleges.

SITC set me down the path to serve by producing tools to promote engagement.

A public sector career and graduate school were new for me, my family, and my friends. I knew I wanted to help people- but I was lost in the process. SITC and my internship site, the Institute on Disability, gave me the passion, the structure, and experience I needed to pursue these opportunities.

At the Institute on Disability, I develop the compendium. The compendium is the most comprehensive collection of disability statistics across the country and is used at the organizational, local, state, and federal level to inform policy around disability.

That is where I discovered exactly what skills around public service could do for me. I could create tools that would have an impact beyond myself that would work towards creating belonging for all people in communities.

Then between SITC and my internship site I got to meet people who were using these public service skills in the work that I was passionate about. It gave me access and made it easy for me to get advice and further direction on where I would go next.

When I decided to apply for graduate programs this support structure allowed me to reach for my dreams – and do so successfully. I ended up being accepted into my top-choice program.

I encourage you to stay in contact with those who have supported you throughout your journey at SITC. Update them on your progress, drop them a message, ask them for advice. They are the ones who have helped you before and they are the people who will help you as you continue in your journey. This support will help you be successful in figuring out what steps you want to take and how to take them.

This journey of discovery has still not ended for me - I still don't know exactly where I want to end up. But SITC has developed my passions and has given me the tools I need to reach out to people to find out how I can pursue those passions.

I hope that wherever you plan to go next, SITC has also given you the passion, the structure, and experience to pursue your next steps. With that congratulations and welcome to an ever-growing community of dedicated and motivated changemakers. Don't be strangers to our SITC community.

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