

July 2025 – Melissa Dubois

Internship Report – Saint-Germain-en-Laye / Winchester Jumelage Summer Program

Internship at the Massachusetts State House – Office of Representative Michael Day

Thanks to the twinning program between Saint-Germain-en-Laye and Winchester, I had the chance to live an incredibly enriching and unforgettable experience. For three weeks, I interned at the Massachusetts State House, in the office of Representative Michael Day. This stay allowed me to explore the workings of the American local political system, while immersing myself in the culture and everyday life of a New England town.

I arrived in Boston on Sunday, July 6. My host family, Joan and Lance Grenzeback, welcomed me at the airport with a welcome sign. This kind and thoughtful gesture set the tone for a warm and generous stay. Both Joan and Lance have been active members of the twinning program for many years and showed great generosity and availability throughout my time with them. I stayed in Winchester, a peaceful, pleasant, and green town located about fifteen minutes from Boston. It was in this calm yet vibrant environment that I spent my evenings and weekends, while commuting to Boston several times a week for my internship.

The Monday after my arrival, I started my internship at the State House. Representative Michael Day personally welcomed me in the conference room of his office. I was then introduced to his team and to the other interns. I discovered a stimulating work environment, mostly composed of American students studying political science or law, and I was the only international intern in the entire institution. I was immediately integrated into the team and supported in my assignments, with great flexibility. I worked three days a week, and was free to choose which days and hours suited me best. This flexible schedule allowed me to fully engage with the internship while still having time to explore the area.

During my time in the office, I helped draft summaries of amendments and bills, conducted legal research to support committee work, and attended several legislative sessions. One session, in particular — focused on combating antisemitism — stood out to me for the quality of the discussions and the strong engagement of those involved. This immersion in a local political institution gave me valuable insight into how laws are made in Massachusetts, helped me improve my legal English vocabulary, and taught me to approach legislative texts with greater precision and critical thinking.

The environment at the State House was intellectually very stimulating. Every day, two “Speaker Series” sessions were held, where a guest — often a political, civic, or academic figure — shared their career journey and ideas. The American interns actively participated, asking numerous questions, and these conversations pushed me to reflect on many pressing social issues, both within the American context and in comparison with the French system. I learned a great deal from my peers, both in terms of how they reason and what civic issues matter most to them.

Outside of the internship, I enjoyed discovering the region’s rich culture. I visited the coastal town of Marblehead, took part in the Italian festival in Newton, went on a whale-watching cruise from Boston harbor, walked the famous Freedom Trail, and explored the city’s major museums, including the Museum of Fine Arts and the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. These experiences were shared with my host family, the two other French students, and several American interns I met at the State House. Our host families also introduced us to many local specialties, such as lobster and the famous wild blueberry muffins.

On my last day at the office, the team at Representative Day's office surprised me with an "ice cream party" in my honor. I was deeply touched by this thoughtful gesture, which reflected the kindness and warmth I had experienced throughout my internship. The bonds I formed with the staff and fellow interns were genuine and filled with enriching conversations.

Most weekends, we traveled to the state of Maine, where we stayed at the vacation home of Mathilde's host family — Mathilde being another French intern working in Winchester's local bookstore. These moments by the ocean, filled with meaningful conversations and peaceful walks, gave us the chance to deepen our connections with our host families and create lasting memories ! Our families generously took turns organizing activities for us, sharing with us many different aspects of American life and warmly welcoming us into their daily routines.

A few events were organized by the twinning committee, including a poolside barbecue and a festive celebration of Bastille Day — which took place, amusingly, on July 11. These gatherings were cheerful and offered a nice opportunity to connect with the other families and participants of the jumelage.

I return from this experience with new perspectives, enriched intellectually and touched on a personal level. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the Saint-Germain-en-Laye/Winchester jumelage program for allowing me to live such an inspiring and formative adventure. This experience gave me the chance to discover another country from the inside, to compare different political systems, to form strong human connections, and to develop skills that will be invaluable for the rest of my journey.

Thank you again for this unique opportunity.



