

Princeton, NJ 08544  
September, 28 1998

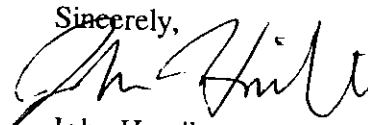
Mr. Guy Wildenstein  
American Society of the French Legion of Honor

Dear Mr. Wildenstein,

Thanks to the support of the American Society of the French Legion of Honor, I was able to work at the Prefecture de l'Essonne this summer. Living in France and working at the Prefecture were amazing opportunities which broadened my horizons to another culture and language. I was able to learn how French government operates and was enlightened to the current political, economic, and social issues relevant to French society.

Interning at the Prefecture de l'Essonne was an extremely beneficial experience. I spent each week of July in a different direction of the Prefecture, learning about the many functions performed. This encompassed daily visits with various officials who explained to me their responsibilities and the services they administered. Weekly meetings regarding unemployment, housing, immigration, and banlieue life exposed me to various economic and social policies and allowed me to gain a wider perspective on French society. I also observed services directly affecting the citizens of the Department of Essonne working in a guichet for driving permits and grey cards, and I gained hands-on experience assembling several passports. Insight into the legal aspect of French Government was achieved by an escorted tour of Europe's largest maximum-security prison in the town Fleury and a visit to court to witness preliminary hearings initiated by the prefecture, recommending that several legal immigrants repeatedly convicted of dangerous crimes be expelled from France.

The internship was nothing short of amazing and provided me with a breadth of diverse, exciting, and enriching experiences. Not only did my French speaking abilities improve, but perhaps more importantly, I was also exposed to another culture and society. By working in France, I was able to actively participate in this discovery rather than just passively observe. I am extremely grateful to the American Society of the French Legion of Honor for making this fantastic opportunity a reality for me.

Sincerely,  
  
John Hamilton