

August 11, 2016

Dear Harvard Club of Cape Cod Members,

I wanted to take the time to thank you all again for funding my summer internship at the Buzzards Bay Coalition. Working at the Coalition has been the best professional experience I've had to date, and it would not have been possible without the support of the Harvard Club of Cape Cod. I'm so grateful for your generosity and for taking an interest in my education and professional development. This experience has made me even more excited to join the Harvard alumni network.

My work at the Buzzards Bay Coalition was largely in the Development office where I helped to organize two major fundraisers: the Buzzards Bay Swim (a 1.2 mile open water swim in New Bedford Harbor) and the Buzzards Bay Watershed Ride (a bike ride with 100, 75, 35, and 10 mile options starting in Little Compton, RI and ending in Woods Hole, MA). I was fortunate enough to shoulder a wide array of responsibilities that encompassed the many facets of event planning. Through groundwork tasks like hanging up fliers and working registration tables at other events, I learned a lot about the persistence and dedication needed to make events happen in the non-profit world. Similarly, I learned a lot about the organizational skills and community partnerships needed to make events run through tasks such as attaining corporate sponsorships and permitting. The results were better than I could have ever hoped: the Swim brought in over \$120,000, and the Ride, happening on October 2, is poised to raise even more. These funds are so valuable to the Coalition, which has ambitious goals to combat the nitrogen pollution harming Buzzards Bay.

The Coalition's president, Mark Rasmussen, also personally assigned several projects to me that allowed me to work in conjunction with other offices, including the Advocacy, Land Conservation, and Education offices. These projects included grant-writing, acquiring a marble statue that will permanently sit in the Coalition's Discovery Center, and doing research on a historic building that the Coalition is planning on renovating for public use. Through these assignments, I was able to connect with other personnel at the Coalition, as well as local historians and environmental activists. Not only did I gain a lot of knowledge regarding my area's local history (of which I was very unaware), but I also gained a lot of professional skills that will be relevant for future employment.

But perhaps my favorite part of my internship this summer was being able to work with the amazing staff at the Coalition. It was an incredible experience to work with such intelligent, passionate, and giving people. The staff of the Coalition is small, but extremely dedicated to making a lasting impact on the communities and environment of Buzzards Bay. I was truly inspired by their hard work and energy, so much so that I'm now considering looking into environmental policy as a focus of my intended concentration in Government. I encourage everyone to learn about the strides that the Buzzards Bay Coalition has made, as well as stay informed on the problems facing Buzzards Bay by checking out www.savebuzzardsbay.org. I

know I definitely will be keeping in touch with the staff at the Coalition as well as staying updated on the important work that they do.

Again, thank you all for funding my internship this summer. Without your help, I would have had to pass up this incredible opportunity, and would've missed out on some really valuable insight into the world of environmental protection groups and non-profit organizations. Interning at the Buzzards Bay Coalition was a great educational and professional experience, but it was also very rewarding. I feel as if the work I completed over my time here has made an impact, however small, on my local environment and community. This summer has been absolutely incredible, and I can't wait to see what my future summers as a Harvard student have in store.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Kassabian". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Michael Kassabian