

Congratulations to French student Muhammad Mahdi who completed an internship at the French Consulate General of France!

Muhammad worked in close collaboration with Mr. Frédéric Bontems, Consul General of France in Houston, and his assistant, Ms. Marie-Laure Reed, on a special project recognizing WWII American veterans who had served in France, and were awarded the Legion of Honor medal, one of the most prestigious awards given for services to the French Republic.



“Being able to speak with and learn about the experiences of a number of American veterans who participated in Europe during World War II is what drove me to apply for this internship at the Consulate General of France in Houston. My job required me to write a brief summary of each veteran’s participation during the war, in French, specifying his or her contributions to France’s liberation. This application would then be sent to the French Embassy in Washington D.C., who would forward the applications to France. If the French government approved the request, I would then write a speech, in English, that the Consul General would read when presenting each veteran with the medal and attribution of “Knight” in the National Order of the Legion of Honor.

Overall, I gained so much more out of this experience that I had originally imagined. Details about World War II are now so deeply engraved into my mind that forgetting any of it is going to be a difficult task in itself. I have made connections with some great people, and my level of fluency of the French language has far surpassed what it was at the beginning. However, it was meeting with these veterans and seeing the joy on their faces upon receiving their award that really showed me that everything I did, no matter how tedious, made a difference in someone’s life.”

Muhammad Mahdi, Summer 2012.