As an Intern at the Greensboro Housing Coalition, I was brought onto the team to assist in their research and advocacy for residents who live in unhealthy homes. Their goal with this project is to reduce the amount of Asthma related hospitalizations by 25% within certain low-income neighborhoods over the next two years. Currently my role is to prepare information and statistics regarding the past census information of the minority make-up of chosen neighborhoods, and then comparing how it correlates with the amount of individuals who have asthma or have recently been in the hospital for asthma related symptoms.

Along with that role, I will be occasionally working with the Homeless Prevention Team, sitting in with clients and helping to assist them with referrals and finding affordable housing. Through the use of certain assessments and scales, I will be able to see the amount of help that an individual can receive, and even make occasional home visits for inspections. These inspections are also part of the preliminary plan for the grant and research that is being done, which is to assess the correlation of asthma in lower-income families, and the severity in relation to the severity of the housing.

One way that I can apply my Sociological Imagination to my role as an intern is looking at the types of disparities in regards to social categories, and seeing the patterns and relationships that come from the job that are being done. An example of this is the idea of racial inequality and the lack of opportunity that is offered to minorities. I have been able to do this already, in the short time, by looking at the types of clients that are coming in, listening to their stories, how they got to the place that they are in, and also the help that they are able to receive or if they were not able to receive enough help and are now back.

As for my future career goals, this internship is shaping up to be an extremely amazing experience that will give me a lot of material as I begin my way into Graduate school. Not only is doing research and actively participating in an approved-IRB study helpful to my growth as a scholar, but being able to see social inequality first hand and it’s effects on people in those categories is as well. As someone who one day would like to teach Sociology, this will give me field experience to pull from to show the effects of social inequality in the real world. Finally, should that not work out, my hope is to work in a non-profit organization that fights for social justice, and I am slowly growing a great love for the fight for environmental justice.

As for connections, I feel that I will build connections with individuals who have been able to see, once again, the effects of social inequality first hand. In the future, should I want to do research in housing disparities, this will give me an open door to people who have worked closely in related fields, and even directly worked with housing disparities.