

Matthew Hayes
CUSE Reflection

My trip to visit Clay Chapman over Spring Break was a phenomenal experience. I traveled to Oklahoma to participate in the construction of a structural brick masonry house. I was able to get hands on experience in many aspects of the structural masonry construction process. As an architecture student, this experience will be invaluable in the future to help produce feasible designs and communicate these designs to builders.

I embarked on the trip hoping to gain a better understanding of structural masonry and other construction techniques and details. However, the week exceeded my wildest expectations. In addition to teaching me a ton about masonry, Clay was also a tremendous resource for design and building advice in general. I definitely gained knowledge in these areas that will be invaluable in the future.

It was also great to see how Clay worked as a true designer-builder. Today very few people design and then personally execute their buildings. Getting to see someone who did this was really neat, and opened my mind to a new and different career possibility.

I am incredibly grateful towards the Center for Undergraduate Scholarly Engagement and its donors; without their assistance I surely would not have had the opportunity to gain this experience. This was an awesome opportunity to get practical education outside of the classroom. I will be able to apply what I learned for the rest of my time at college and throughout my career. Hopefully I will be able to take advantage of more opportunities like this in the future!