Josiah Venture is a ministry organization dedicated to the movement of God among the youth of Central and Eastern Europe that finds its home in the local church. Josiah venture is currently located in twelve countries in Europe. I am serving this summer as a short-term missionary in Havírov, Czech Republic working with Josiah Venture’s performing arts focused ministry Fusion. My main responsibility is leading evangelistic music/performing arts camps for high school students. These camps are not only a vital tool to bringing the gospel to youth in a relevant and relaxed environment, but they also set the foundation for year-round music/performing arts based ministries run by local churches. Unlike the English Camp side of Josiah Venture’s summer ministry, the high school students I meet at Fusion camp are already involved with a Fusion ministry in their town and are therefore plugged in to a local church where they hear about who Jesus is on a weekly basis. This provides an invaluable springboard in which to start conversations about the personal relationship Jesus Christ offers them.

This summer I will be involved with two Fusion Camps in the Czech Republic. The first camp is Central Camp, which is made up of four different Fusion churches across central and western Czech Republic. The second camp is the Havírov Camp, which is the largest Fusion and best established of all of Josiah Venture’s Fusion ministries. Havírov Fusion was established in 2009 and was the first Fusion ministry to be launched in any of Josiah Ventures twelve countries. Needless to say, I am very thankful to be working with a team of nationals who are also radical visionaries. This summer I will also have the opportunity to travel to Ukraine where a local church in Lviv has just launched their first Fusion. I am particularly thankful
for this opportunity in light of the recent conflict in Ukraine because it provides an opportunity for me and my team to remind the people of Ukraine that they have not been disregarded, that a great injustice has taken place but they are not forgotten. 

*We care.* We care not with our empty words but with our actions. We love them and desire to enter into this conflict alongside them, crying with them, screaming with them, and praying for healing. This is how we share the love of God; by coming alongside and bearing up those that have no strength to stand on their own.

My responsibilities as an American intern vary greatly depending on the needs of each camp but some of my responsibilities include the following. I sing in the camp band, which is responsible for worship music and secular music to open and close morning and evening programs. This has been one of my favorite parts of my internship for many reasons. Music is another form of communication; it breaks the boundaries of language and culture and also reveals vulnerability in each one of us. Singing and praising God in front of high school students is a way I share with them the irreplaceable joy that I find in Christ Jesus and has sparked innumerable conversations. I am also responsible for the dance workshop at each Fusion camp. I danced competitively for most of my life but have never had the opportunity to share my passion for dance in a ministry setting. The fruit that has come from my time in dance class with students has blown me away. It has provided a safe space where teens are freed from the bondage of ridicule, judgment and criticism. It also gives me the opportunity to encourage them in truth in love through their shortcomings as God encourages us, helping them to understand that we will never be perfect or “enough” in any avenue of life, but it doesn't matter because we have
freedom in Christ Jesus. On a more practical level, I choreographed a jazz routine to a popular secular song that my students love and get to perform for their friends and family at the final concert at the end of camp. In my spare time, I focus on building relationships with the teens I meet so that I can share with them the most fulfilling relationship of all, deciding to dedicate everything they are to God.

When I am not preparing for camp or working at a Fusion camp, my intern team and I travel to different towns across the Czech Republic that have already established Fusion programs and spend time with their students at Fusion rehearsals and concerts. We also do school visits where we promote Fusion camps and encourage kids to attend and get plugged in with a Fusion program in their area. Above all else, our focus is to encourage and provide support for the local churches and nationals that run these year long Fusion programs so that when we leave at the end of the summer the work we started continues to grow throughout the year.

My experience this summer thus far has obviously been quite a bit different than something you would find in a typical ”professional environment” but it has taught me a great deal about the type of supervision and support I need to be most successful. Being entrusted to take on a project and do it well without much supervision says a lot to me about my superior’s faith in my abilities and self-discipline. It is for this reason that I find I thrive best when I am given clear directions of expectations but am left with space to create and succeed on my own. It has fostered a confidence in me to follow my instincts and has encouraged me to continue to hone the gifts God has given me.