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Advancing Quilting Skills with a mentor, Coulter Fussell (Summer 2022)

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Sydney DuPriest, associate director Campus Communication and Engagement, Marketing and Communications, advanced her quilting skills and learned from a mentor.

I spent the week of June 27 quilting a quilt top I found in Water Valley. The top was made in the fifties from all these colorful, contrasting prints pieced together in a sort of eyeballed, haphazard pattern. The whole effect really inspired me. Each day I would carry sewing supplies and bug spray out to a lawn chair underneath a tree in my backyard and quilt until it got too hot, and then I would quilt inside for the rest of the afternoon. Sewing all day was delightful, although I quickly realized that that it took discipline.

My project included learning from Water Valley quilter Coulter Fussell. Coulter talked me through different quilting techniques and approaches for working with material that originated with someone else. I compensated Coulter with part of the stipend and spent the rest on quilting supplies.

I also learned that even a week of sewing isn't enough to finish a quilt. Now I know why quilters used to have quilting bees! This quilt has become very personal to me, and I've been continuing to work on it as I can. Being able to start with a fully made quilt top helped me feel ready to begin another quilt from start to finish.

I was so grateful to have uninterrupted time to spend on something so fulfilling. It helped change the way I think about my free time and reminded me that those moments are valuable and full of potential.