Background
Over the summer I worked in the technology division of a financial firm in Jersey City, NJ. I spent most of my summer working with Visual Studio 2010 developing a .NET application in C#.

Evaluation
Overall, I felt that I was having an impact. There was a lot of interaction with members of the team, and a lot of feedback about my product. There were even conference calls with team-members in a different country. Furthermore, the high number of interns at the firm (and many of them from Cornell) was a nice way to keep in touch with people of my age-group. There were many intern-focused learning experiences organized by the company.

Housing
Over the summer, there is an influx of interns and summer students into New York City. That being said, there is a variety of housing options that cater to the younger crowd. I ended up staying in one of New York University dorms’ at 400 Broome Street, conveniently located near Little Italy and nearby China Town. At Broome, the rooms are located in large apartments, giving you the ability to spread out. They are also air-conditioned (a must if you are staying in the city over the summer). The dorm system was a very attractive option because it provides a great location at a competitive price along with the opportunity to meet a variety of other students and interns. That being said, NYU doesn’t actually hold social activities for its residents, so all interaction between different apartments is somewhat limited. The downside to the dorm experience is that you cannot hold loud gatherings in your apartment. A considerable percentage of the interns I interacted with in and outside the company also stayed in NYU dorms, but a few rented apartments with their friends.

Fitness
I quickly learned that running inside the city was not such a good idea due to the number of intersections, crowded streets, lack of fresh air and boring views. Luckily, I discovered a pedestrian walkway and bike path that encircles the entire southern part of Manhattan. From what I experienced over the summer, it is popular with walkers, runners, skaters, bikers, and sight-seers. Since my dorm was located in the center of lower Manhattan, I ended up running East/West until I reached walkway, encircled the city, and came back home from the other side of the island. Staying in NYU dorms gave me access to their sports centers for free. The closest one to my dorm was the Coles Sports and Recreation Center at W. Houston St. with Mercer St.. It has a gym, basketball courts, squash courts, tennis courts, and most importantly: a lap-swimming pool and a track on the roof.

Transportation
Living in NYC but commuting to Jersey during the workweek is considered to be the reverse-commute. For me, the commute itself involved taking the green subway line down from Spring St. to Fulton St., walking to the Path station and going from the World Trade Center to Exchange Place. It took an average of half-an-hour, which means that in the future, I would reconsider my housing location. Moving around in the city itself is relatively straightforward thanks to the subway system. There is absolutely no need for a car unless you want to travel outside of the city, and even then it is possible to get places using the train/bus system.