Leveling the Playing Field:
The Benefits, Challenges, and Opportunities of Internships in the U.S.

White Paper
November 2016
The B.A. Rudolph Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization that provides educational and general support to women for whom a small amount of support could make a significant difference.

To reduce cost and protect the environment, this white paper is published on our website at barudolphfoundation.org for the public. Any questions on this report or the work of the Foundation may be directed to:
info@barudolphfoundation.org.

Author: Kristen Hecht, with edits by Rebecca Davis and Maggie Moore

Graphics: Maggie Moore

Copyright © 2016 by the B.A. Rudolph Foundation. All rights reserved.

The text of this publication, or any part, may not be reproduced without written permission from the Board of Directors of the B.A. Rudolph Foundation.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Executive Summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>Statistics on Internships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>History and Evolution of Internships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>Current State of the Field of Internships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Variations in Employers who Offer Paid vs. Unpaid Internships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Legal Issues Surrounding Unpaid Internships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>What Motivates Employers to Provide Internships?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>What Motivates Students to Participate in Internships?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Resources for Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Top Six Recommendations to Level the Playing Field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ask anyone how they made the leap from student to professional in their career and there is likely to be a connection or past experience that bridges the two life phases, such as attending a conference, participating in a study abroad program, volunteering for an organization, or completing an internship. Each involves bringing classroom lessons into the real world.

Internships, in particular, help young professionals to build professional contacts, gain practical experience in their field, acquire new skills, learn workplace culture and etiquette, and ultimately become more competent and competitive in the job market. **Internship experience has been proven to increase a student’s chance of getting a job in their field with 51.7 percent of graduating students who held an internship receiving a job offer by graduation.** In an economic environment where only only 17 percent of graduating students have a job offer at graduation, internships have become a vital component of learning and in some fields, a necessary experience in order to be competitive in the job market.¹

Despite the professional benefits of participating in an internship, a number of disparities and legal issues persist when it comes to internships. Consider these figures:

- Approximately **1.5 million internships are filled each year** across the U.S., of which half are unpaid.
- **Women participate in 20 percent more unpaid internships than men.**
- When race is considered, Hispanic American students have the lowest rate of participating in an internship (53.3%), followed by African American students (59.5 percent), Asian American students (63.2 percent) and Caucasian students (68.2 percent).²
- While 29 percent of students receive financial support from their family to offset the costs of an unpaid internship, many families cannot afford such an additional expense.
- **Seventy-seven percent of students end up working a second job** in order to cover associated costs, a commitment which detracts from their studies or the internship itself.
- As a result, many students are left with a difficult choice: participate in an unpaid internship that may advance their career but will cause monetary stress, work a part-time job with little professional value, or attempt to do both (which almost always has a negative impact on their academics).³

These statistics demonstrate that **an unlevel playing field exists when it comes to participation in internships.** This white paper shines a light on these issues by highlighting current gaps and opportunities in the state of the field of internships. Recommendations are made for students, employers, academic institutions, government agencies, media professionals, and individuals. Finally, we conclude with a call to action for anyone reading this report. With your support, we can help level the internship playing field by providing scholarships to women who have secured an unpaid or underpaid internship, and who otherwise would not be able to afford such an opportunity. For them, a small amount of support could make a significant difference in starting their career.

---

STATISTICS ON U.S. INTERNSHIPS

Internships in the United States per year

1.5 million

Students with Job Offers by Graduation

51.7%
17%
1+ Internship
No Internship

100% of Employers prefer to hire applicants with work experience

Who Interns?

64.6% 65.8%

U.S. Interns by Ethnicity (%)

White: 68
Asian: 63
African: 60
Hispanic: 53

Men and women participate equally in internships, but women are 20 percent more likely to be unpaid

Who Gets Paid?

1/2 of all internships are unpaid

To afford internships, students get financial support from family or a second job.

29% 77%
The United States Department of Labor defines an internship as “a formal program providing a practical learning experience for beginners in an occupation or profession that lasts a limited amount of time. [Among other criteria,] an internship experience is for the benefit of the student, the employer shall derive no immediate advantage from the activities of the intern, and the intern shall not displace regular employees.” Internships function as "a form of experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional setting. Internships give students the opportunity to gain valuable applied experience and make connections in professional fields they are considering for career paths, and give employers the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent." While timing may vary between organizations, an average internship lasts 10 weeks to three months, or the length of one semester or quarter. Typical start times are January or February for a spring internship, May or June for a summer internship, and August or September for a fall internship.  

The origin of internships comes from the concept of experiential learning, which was championed over 100 years ago by John Dewey, a leading educational theorist and reformer of the 20th century. Dewey argued that experiential learning opportunities reduce the gap between academic and real-life experience by giving students exposure to the processes that take place beyond a school setting.

---


Experiential learning was applied to apprenticeships, often found in the fields of accounting or health care. By the 1990s, the formality of apprenticeships evolved into internships, providing benefits to both the companies who now had a new force of unpaid labor to draw from, and to interns who saw internships as a path to employment.⁸

Throughout the next decade, participation in internship programs exploded from 10 percent of college graduates who held at least one internship in the mid-90s to over 80 percent of college graduates in the mid-2000s.

The value of internships in terms of professional opportunity saw a notable increase as well; 5 percent of professionals received their first full-time job through an internship in the mid-90s vs. 30 percent in the mid-2000s. The numbers continue to increase to today with 51.7 percent of graduating students who held an internship receiving a job offer by graduation (see Figure 1). In an economic environment where only only 17 percent of graduating students have a job offer at graduation, internships have become a vital component of learning and in some fields, a necessary experience in order to be competitive in the job market.⁹

---

**Figure 1:** Percent of students who have a job offer at the time of graduation. Data obtained from NACE’s 2013 Internships and Co-op Survey.

---


⁹ See footnote 1
While there is no centralized agency that tracks internships in the U.S., two main organizations - Intern Bridge and the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) - have conducted studies on internships, salaries, demographics, and trends. Intern Bridge - a college recruiting, consulting and research firm that conducts the nation’s largest annual internship research project - estimates that approximately 1.5 million internships are filled each year across the U.S. Half of those are unpaid. One-fifth are both unpaid and do not provide academic credit. While these numbers are estimated calculations, it is most likely that if anything, they are under-estimates due to the fact that there are no incentives for companies or organizations to report their interns.

The second main research organization, NACE, is an association of colleges, universities, career center professionals, recruiters, and business affiliates. The association provides resources and research related to employment of the college educated. This includes tracking starting salaries, recruiting and hiring practices, and student attitudes and outcomes; identifying best practices and benchmarks; and forecasting hiring trends in the job market. In a 2015 study, NACE concluded that men and women participate nearly equally in internships; 64.6 percent and 65.8 percent respectively. Despite this seeming equality, however, women participated in 20 percent more unpaid internships than men. When race is considered, Hispanic American students have the lowest rate of participating in an internship (53.3%), compared to African American students (59.5 percent), Asian American students (63.2 percent) and Caucasian students (68.2 percent).10

According to Intern Bridge’s 2012 report, socio-economic factors appear to play a role in compensation as well. **Students from high income households are more likely to take part in unpaid internships when compared to students from lower income households.** As a result, we see unpaid internships going to only those who can afford it.11 These statistics support Ford Foundation President Darren Walker’s statement that “America’s current internship system, in which contacts and money matter more than talent, contributes to an economy in which access and opportunity go to the people who already have the most of both.”12 To further illustrate this, while **29 percent of students receive financial support from their family to offset the costs of an unpaid internship,** **77 percent of students end up working a second job in order to cover associated costs.** In the end, many students are left with a difficult choice: participate in an unpaid internship that may advance their career but will cause monetary stress, work a part-time job with little professional value, or attempt to do both (which almost always has a negative impact on both their academics and internship).13

---

11 See footnote 7
13 See footnote 7
Not only are there variations in the types of students participating in internships; employers vary in terms of their organization type, size, and number of hours they request of their interns. According to a 2015 study conducted by NACE, these factors in turn contribute to the employer's likelihood of compensating their interns and if so, to what degree.

The 2015 study found that private, for-profit companies are significantly more likely to pay their interns (77.7% offered paid internships) than either non-profit or government organizations (33% and 38% paid, respectively) (see Figure 2). When it comes to sector, the study revealed that organizations in a social services related industry offered the highest amount of unpaid internships (81.7 percent), followed by education, government, and health care.  

![U.S. Interns by Sector](image)

**Figure 2:** Variations in compensation of interns (paid vs. unpaid) by employer type. Data obtained from NACE's Class of 2015 Student Survey.

The size of an organization, as measured by its number of employees, also impacted the rate of paid internships. The more employees an employer had, the more likely the intern would receive an hourly compensation. Of organizations with nine or fewer employees, only 30.4 percent of interns received an hourly wage. This steadily increased to 76.9 percent for employers who had over 5,000 employees (see Figure 3).

Finally, the more hours an intern worked, the more likely she or he would be paid (see Figure 4): 70.3 percent of interns who worked full-time (defined as 35 or more hours per week) received an hourly wage compared to only 33.1 percent for interns who worked part-time (34 hours or less per week).

---

14 See footnote 10
15 See footnote 7
16 See footnote 7
Figure 3: Variations in intern compensation by employer size, demonstrated by percent of interns that received an hourly wage. Data obtained from Intern Bridge’s 2012 Intern Salary Report.

Figure 4: Variations in intern compensation by number of hours worked, demonstrated by percent of interns that received an hourly wage. Data obtained from Intern Bridge’s 2012 Intern Salary Report.
LEGAL ISSUES SURROUNDING UNPAID INTERNSHIPS

“Criteria for unpaid internships:

▷ The internship...is similar to training which would be given in an educational environment;

▷ The internship experience is for the benefit of the intern;

▷ The intern does not displace regular employees;

With so many variations in paid vs. unpaid internships by employer type, size, and numbers of hours worked, there are bound to be legal issues surrounding compensation of interns. Recent lawsuits have indeed brought such issues to light on a national level, causing increased scrutiny of existing state and federal laws surrounding internships. We will review many of these legal issues here, but in short, an internship can only be unpaid if the intern earns academic credit or if the employer is a non-profit, in which case it is considered volunteering.

Federal laws surrounding internships stem from a 1947 Supreme Court case that triggered the Department of Labor to outline a "Six-Prong Test." This test lists six criteria that employers must satisfy in order to have unpaid interns. According to the U.S. Department of Labor:

1. The internship, even though it includes actual operation of the facilities of the employer, is similar to training which would be given in an educational environment;
2. The internship experience is for the benefit of the intern;
3. The intern does not displace regular employees, but works under close supervision of existing staff;
4. The employer that provides the training derives no immediate advantage from the activities of the intern; and on occasion its operations may actually be impeded;
5. The intern is not necessarily entitled to a job at the conclusion of the internship; and
6. The employer and the intern understand that the intern is not entitled to wages for the time spent in the internship.17

Of the six requirements, most employers have difficulty meeting prongs three and four. In a challenging economic environment worldwide, many employers find it more cost-effective to hire unpaid interns instead of paid employees, therefore violating prong three. With regards to prong four, this criterion can only be met by definition if - rather than internships - employers provide job shadowing opportunities in which the student is “under close and constant supervision of regular employees, but the intern performs no or minimal work. [In this scenario] the activity is more likely to be viewed as a bona fide education experience.”18

18 See footnote 17
LEGAL ISSUES SURROUNDING UNPAID INTERNSHIPS

Unfortunately, employers continue to ignore the Department of Labor’s six-prong test for unpaid interns. According to a 2012 Intern Bridge study, 18.2 percent of interns received neither monetary compensation nor academic credit (a number that historically continues to climb). Moreover, case law is practically nonexistent, leaving these six prongs open to the interpretation of employers and labor attorneys. As a result, push back has ramped up in recent years by interns, trade unions, law firms, local governments, colleges, universities, and mass media.

In 2011, the legal team Outten & Golden LLP filed a Class Action Complaint against Fox Searchlight Pictures, Inc., a film division of Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation, following reports of their not paying interns who worked on the film "Black Swan." Five years later, a settlement was reached in which those who had interned at various Fox entities from 2005-2010 would receive approximately $495 each. Outten & Golden LLP continues to take on cases related to unpaid internships; their “Unpaid Interns Lawsuit” website lists a variety of cases they have worked on, from mass media companies and talk show hosts to magazine companies and literary agencies.

In 2014, New York City’s Mayor Blasio signed into law a bill that protects interns in New York City from sexual harassment and workplace discrimination. The new administrative code protects interns - regardless of their being paid or not - in the same way that current employees are protected. Unfortunately, this practice is not the norm nationwide due to the fact that interns are not classified as employees. As such, interns are not protected by the same federal laws that prohibit job discrimination in its varying forms. This includes labor laws regarding hours worked, sexual harassment, working environment, individuals with disabilities, workplace injury, whistle-blower

“Criteria for unpaid internships (continued):

- The employer that provides the training derives no immediate advantage from the activities of the intern.
- The intern is not necessarily entitled to a job at the conclusion of the internship; and
- The employer and the intern understand that the intern is not entitled to wages for the time spent in the internship.

---

18 See footnote 7
Interns are not protected by the same federal laws that prohibit job discrimination in its varying forms. This includes labor laws regarding hours worked, sexual harassment, working environment, individuals with disabilities, workplace injury, whistle-blower protection, and discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or age.  

In 2015, worldwide media attention was given to the United Nations (UN) after it was learned that one of its interns, David Hyde, was living in a tent by Lake Geneva in order to afford his unpaid internship at the UN. As an organization that promotes human rights, decent work, and economic opportunity, the story of David Hyde put a spotlight on the UN's apparent moral inconsistency.

And in the academic arena, universities like Stockton University have enforced labor laws on behalf of their students by allowing nonprofit organizations and government agencies to recruit students from their campus for unpaid internships, but requiring businesses to provide their interns with compensation.


WHAT MOTIVATES EMPLOYERS TO PROVIDE INTERNSHIPS?

The motivation behind employers to provide internships and deciding whether they are paid or unapid lie primarily in the differences between employer type (for-profit, not-for-profit, or government).

Unsurprisingly, for-profit companies exist in large part to generate a profit. They look at interns as being the most cost-effective way of recruiting and harnessing an educated and qualified labor force. According to Intern Bridge’s 2012 report, “There is no better, no cheaper, and no more effective college recruiting tool than a properly executed internship program.” Non-profit organizations, on the other hand, fundamentally exist to serve a mission or social purpose. They recruit interns in order to increase their productivity and bring the organization closer to realizing its social purpose. Meanwhile, government agencies are motivated by constituents and look to interns as a way of increasing productivity and completing the tasks that will ultimately serve or support their constituent base.26

With these motivations in mind, let’s consider the philosophy or thought process behind paid versus unpaid internships. Two main factors are at work. First, many employers simply do not have the financial resources to pay their interns. “Depending on the sector, not paying interns is a necessary step to keep their operation afloat while exposing young people to their projects and exciting them about their work,” says Travis A. Lovett, director of the Center for Public Interest Careers.27 More and more, and despite labor laws, interns are replacing paid full-time employees and in doing so, organizations are saving approximately $2 billion per year. The second factor at work is the lack of incentive for employers to change the current culture of not paying interns. There is a deeply ingrained perception that internships are a way of paying one’s dues. This mentality cuts across industries and sectors of societies, making it that much more difficult to change.28

“Interns are replacing paid full-time employees and in doing so, organizations are saving approximately $2 billion per year....There is a lack of incentive for employers to change the current culture of not paying interns, making it that much more difficult to change.”

---

26 See footnote 7


28 See footnote 7
Regardless of these motivations, financial limitations, and barriers to changing the culture, recent studies have shown that the cost of providing interns with an hourly wage are outweighed by gains in the areas of recruitment, retention, and levels of productivity if a compensation is provided.

Statistically speaking, the higher the hourly wage, the higher level of productivity of the intern. Additionally, higher hourly wages are associated with an increased likelihood of the intern accepting an offer of full-time employment at that organization (see Figure 5), even preferring their internship host organization over outside offers (see Figure 6), and a decrease in their search for jobs elsewhere (see Figure 7). Moreover, the higher the compensation, the more likely the intern would be to speak positively to others about their internship, thereby helping the employer when it comes time to recruit for the next semester. When looking at costs and benefits of paid vs. unpaid internships in these terms, an hourly intern wage of $10-$15 can yield countless dividends in the future.29

Figure 5: The relationship between an intern’s hourly wage and his or her interest in accepting a full-time job at the place of internship. Data obtained from Intern Bridge’s 2012 Intern Salary Report.

29 See footnote 7
Figure 6: The relationship between an intern’s hourly wage and his or her consideration of working with the host organization before any other place of employment. Data obtained from Intern Bridge’s 2012 Intern Salary Report.

Figure 7: The relationship between an intern’s hourly wage and his or her search for a job outside of the host company. Data obtained from Intern Bridge’s 2012 Intern Salary Report.
Interns choose to intern for more than just money. According to Intern Bridge’s 2012 study, the top reasons, in order, that students participate in an internship are:

1. To gain hands on experience in their field
2. To become better prepared for employment in their field of interest
3. To learn new skills
4. To gain a realistic preview of the workplace
5. To make professional contacts
6. To explore a new organization
7. To explore a new industry
8. To earn money
9. To receive a full time job offer from the company
10. To fulfill my degree requirements

Coming in at number eight, money is clearly not the driving force for securing an internship. In fact, nearly 70 percent of students surveyed said that they would accept less pay in exchange for greater work experience in their field of interest (see Figure 8).

Figure 8: Variation in what students value more when it comes to work experience vs. pay, demonstrated by percent of students who would accept less money in exchange for greater work experience. Data obtained from Intern Bridge’s 2012 Intern Salary Report.

30 See footnote 7
31 See footnote 7
And while experience does not immediately cover the cost of rent and other living expenses incurred while interning, it can reap tremendous rewards down the road. NACE’s 2015 Job Outlook study reported that employers made full-time job offers to 65 percent of their interns; 79 percent accepted those offers. Moreover, 100 percent of employers said that they prefer to hire an applicant who has work experience, 75 percent prefer applicants with relevant work experience, and 60 percent said they prefer work experience that came from an internship.\(^{32}\)

This does not mean, however, that compensation plays no role in an intern’s rationale. In fact, there is a positive relationship between an intern’s hourly wage and his or her overall satisfaction with the internship experience (see Figure 9). The higher the wage interns receive, the more they report that they understand themselves and their occupation, are learning the pros and cons of working in their particular field, are developing new skills, and realize their own professional strengths and weaknesses.\(^{33}\)

**Figure 9:** The higher the wage an intern receives, the higher his or her overall satisfaction with the internship experience. Data obtained from Intern Bridge’s 2012 Intern Salary Report

---

\(^{32}\) See footnote 10

\(^{33}\) See footnote 7
HOW TO FIND INTERNSHIPS

Career fairs and similar on-campus recruiting mechanisms are the top rated ways to match students with internships. When it comes to salaries, Intern Bridge’s 2012 report showed that students who used their on-campus career center secured higher wages than those who did not by 10.7%. Students who used faculty contacts or academic departments were able to secure an even higher salary.\textsuperscript{34}

In addition to campus resources, students should try to build and utilize multiple networks when searching for an internship. Connections through LinkedIn, Facebook, or alumni groups can help in identifying openings or providing advice when submitting an application. Participation in conferences, seminars, and events can help to build professional networks that will benefit them for years to come. Additionally, students’ independent research on employers of interest or websites and career boards that list internship opportunities can help in identifying opportunities.

WHERE TO FIND FUNDING

There are a variety of sources that provide funding for academic costs or expenses related to unpaid internships:

**Federal funding:**

To support academic costs, students can apply for financial aid by submitting a free application for federal student aid. As a part of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal Student Aid is the largest provider of student financial aid in the nation. More than $150 billion is awarded each year to more than 13 million students in the form of grants, loans, and work-study funds.

**College and university funding:**

Students often visit campus Career Centers to obtain information they may have on sources of funding for both academic and internship-related costs. Many colleges and universities have established programs that specifically help students pursue unpaid internships. Here are just a few:

- American University’s Eagle Internship Fund
- Boston College’s Eagle Intern Fellowship Program
- Boston University’s Yawkey Nonprofit Internship Program
- Bryn Mawr College Summer Internship Funding Program
- Carleton College’s Internship Funding
- City University of New York’s Macaulay Honors College Paid Funding for Unpaid Internships

\textsuperscript{34} See footnote 7
Columbia University’s Columbia College Alumni and Parent Internship Fund
Cornell University
George Washington University’s Knowledge in Action Career Internship Fund
Harvard University’s Center for Public Interest Careers
Indiana University’s Greater Good Internship Fund
Middlebury College’s Funding for Unpaid Summer Internships
Oberlin College’s Funding for Summer Experiences
Sewanee University’s funding for Unpaid Summer Internships
Tufts University’s Summer Internship Grants
University of Chicago Funding for Unpaid Internships
University of Maryland’s Bright Futures: ’Unpaid Internship' Scholarship Fund
University of Pennsylvania’s Funding Resources for Summer Opportunities
University of Texas’ Archer Center
University of Washington’s Evan’s School of Public Policy & Governance Internship Funding
Wellesley College Funding for Practical Learning Experiences
William & Mary University’s funding for Unpaid Summer Internships

Please let us know of any other colleges or universities that provide students with funding for unpaid or underpaid internships. Email info@barudolphfoundation.org with the names and we will add them to the list.

Grants and scholarships:
Finally, students may explore grants and scholarship opportunities for both academic and internship-related costs. Grants and scholarships are similar to financial aid but do not require repayment. Grants are often need-based, while scholarships are usually merit-based.

The B.A. Rudolph Foundation provides educational and general support to young women for whom a small amount of support could make a significant difference. Since its founding, the Foundation has awarded scholarships to 38 women through its Undergraduate Public Service, Graduate Public Service, STEM, and Clinton School of Public Service scholarship opportunities.35 Please check our website for current and future scholarship opportunities. If you are aware of other organizations that provide funding for unpaid or underpaid internships, please email us at info@barudolphfoundation.org so that we can share these opportunities with interested individuals.

______________________________

35 Number of scholarships awarded as of July 2016.
The following is a list of other resources, search engines, scholarship programs, and how-to guides on identifying scholarship options.36

Search engines and scholarship programs:

- www.apiasf.org/scholarship_apiASF.html – the nation’s largest non-profit organization devoted to providing college scholarships for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI)
- www.cappex.com – free website where you learn which colleges want you, before you apply
- www.cashcourse.org – information for college students to stay financially informed
- www.chegg.com – connect with scholarships and learn about colleges
- www.cksf.org – educational & scholarship opportunities for students of all levels
- www.coca-colascholarsfoundation.org/ – The Coca-Cola Scholars Program Scholarship supports more than 1,400 college students each year,. Scholarship recipients excel academically and in service to others.
- www.collegefund.org – provides Native students with scholarships and financial support for the nation’s 33 accredited tribal colleges and universities
- www.dellscholars.org – Dell Scholars Program recognizes academic potential and determination in students that have a definite need for financial assistance
- www.fastweb.com – create a profile and let fastweb do the research for you
- www.gmsp.org – The Gates Millennium Scholars (GMS) Program provides outstanding low income African American, American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian Pacific Islander American, and Hispanic American students with an opportunity to complete an undergraduate college education in any discipline they choose
- www.knowhow2go.org – complete information on college prep, whether in middle school or seniors
- www.latino collegedollars.org – scholarship information for Latino students
- www.meritaid.com – free source for $11 billion in merit aid scholarships from 1,000s of colleges
- www.myscholly.com – mobile app that provides students with a fast and simple way to find scholarships for college
- www.panhellenicscholarships.org/ – provides scholarships and educational programs to Greek American students
- www.scholarshipamerica.org – provides information and resources for your scholarship search
- www.scholarshipacademy.org – offers curriculum to help students identify tailored scholarship options and build solid scholarship profile
- www.scholarships.com – free college scholarship search and financial aid information
- www.scholarshipworkshop.com/students/using-the-scholarship-toolbox.html - provides information on how to get started on the scholarship search
- www.thurgoodmarshallfund.net – provide scholarships, programmatic and capacity building support to the 47 public Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)
- www.uncf.org – awards 10,000 students each year through 400 scholarship and internship programs so that students from low- and moderate-income families can afford college tuition, books and room and board

Thus far, we have examined the state of the field of internships, highlighted professional benefits to both the intern and employer, and identified current disparities and legal issues surrounding participation in an internship. We conclude by providing the following recommendations – for students, employers, academic institutions, government agencies, media professionals, and individuals – to help level the internship playing field.

1. For students and young professionals:
   - **Take advantage of your campus’ career centers, career fairs, and other campus resources.**
     - Why? Career fairs and similar on-campus recruiting mechanisms are the top rated ways to match students with internships. When it comes to salaries, students who used their on-campus career center, faculty contacts, or academic departments secured higher wages than those who did not. 37
   - **If possible, participate in an internship.**
     - Why? 100 percent of employers said that they prefer to hire an applicant who has work experience, 75 percent prefer applicants with relevant work experience, and 60 percent said they prefer work experience that came from an internship. 38
   - **Take your internship seriously and make the most out of the experience.**
     - Why? 51.7 percent of graduating students who held an internship receive a job offer by graduation. In an economic environment where only only 17 percent of graduating students have a job offer at graduation, internships have become a vital component of learning and in some fields, a necessary experience in order to be competitive in the job market. 39

2. For employers:
   - **Be aware of and adhere to federal laws surrounding internships.**
     - Why? The Department of Labor’s "Six-Prong Test" outlines six criteria that employers must satisfy in order to have unpaid interns. Failure to comply may result in legal action down the road, as was seen in the case of the Black Swan lawsuit. 40
   - **Be aware of and adhere to state and local laws surrounding internships.**
     - Why? State and local governments are increasingly passing legislation that protects interns. For example, in 2014, New York City signed into law a bill that protects interns in New York City from sexual harassment and workplace discrimination. The administrative code protects interns - regardless of their being paid or not - in the same way that current employees are protected. 41
   - **Provide interns an hourly compensation.**
     - Why? Studies have shows that the higher the hourly wage, the higher level of productivity of the intern. Additionally, higher hourly wages are associated with an increased likelihood of the intern accepting an offer of full-time employment at that organization, even preferring their internship host organization over

37 See footnote 7
38 See footnote 10
39 See footnote 1
40 See footnote 20
41 See footnote 22
outside offers. The intern is also more likely to speak positively to others about their internship, thereby helping the employer when it comes time to recruit for the next semester.\(^{42}\)

- **Provide interns with professional development opportunities.**
  - Why? Interns choose to intern for more than just money. They are there to learn and to grow professionally. We all have a larger responsibility to help the next generation of professionals be prepared to join the workforce. Plus, if you invest directly in a student intern, you’re more likely to have an excellent candidate who has your full confidence for a job in your organization.\(^{43}\)

- **Increase collaboration with academic institutions.**
  - Why? On-campus recruiting mechanisms are the top rated ways to match students with internships. Moreover, colleges and universities have started enforcing labor laws on behalf of their students in the absence of federal regulation of employers with internship programs.\(^{44}\) Increased collaboration with academic institutions will help ensure that you are complying with their rules and that they will continue to promote your internship program to future students.

3. For academic institutions:

- **Offer career services that help students locate and apply for internships and jobs**
  - Why? Career fairs and similar on-campus recruiting mechanisms are the top rated ways to match students with internships. When it comes to salaries, students who used their on-campus career center, faculty contacts, or academic departments secured higher wages than those who did not.\(^{45}\) You can also help properly prepare your students to make the most of their internship by discussing goals, networking skills, and professional etiquette.

- **Offer scholarships that support underrepresented students (women and minorities) participating in unpaid internships.**
  - Why? Women participate in 20 percent more unpaid internships than men. When race is considered, Hispanic American students have the lowest rate of participating in an internship (53.3%), followed by African American students (59.5 percent), Asian American students (63.2 percent) and Caucasian students (68.2 percent).\(^{46}\)

- **Increase interaction and collaboration with employers to ensure protection of interns coming from your campus.**
  - Why? In the absence of federal regulation of employers with internship programs, colleges and universities have started enforcing labor laws on behalf of their students. For example, Stockton University allows nonprofit organizations and government agencies to recruit students from their campus for unpaid internships, but requires businesses to provide their interns with compensation.\(^{47}\)

\(^{42}\) See footnote 7
\(^{43}\) See footnote 7
\(^{44}\) See footnote 26
\(^{45}\) See footnote 7
\(^{46}\) See footnote 10
\(^{47}\) See footnote 26
TOP SIX RECOMMENDATIONS TO LEVEL THE PLAYING FIELD

4. For government agencies:

- Establish a federal oversight mechanism for employers that have internship programs.
  ■ Why? Currently there is no federal system in place that tracks internship programs or monitors their behavior. As a result, employers are replacing paid full-time employees with unpaid interns. In doing so, organizations are saving approximately $2 billion per year and lack any incentive to change the current culture of not paying interns.48

- Pass state and local laws that increase protections of interns.
  ■ Why? Interns are not protected by the same federal laws that prohibit job discrimination in its varying forms. This includes labor laws regarding hours worked, sexual harassment, working environment, individuals with disabilities, workplace injury, whistle-blower protection, and discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or age.49

5. For media:

- Continue to shine a light on mistreatment of interns.
  ■ Why? Interns are often not in the position to put pressure on organizations when it comes to compensation and treatment. As was demonstrated with an unpaid intern at the United Nations, worldwide media attention can help draw attention to organizations with unfair labor practices.50

6. For individuals:

- Provide advice, mentorship, or professional connections to students or interns trying to start their career.
  ■ Why? Students are seeking this very information. In order of priority, interns hope to: gain hands on experience in their field; become better prepared for employment in their field of interest; learn new skills; gain a realistic preview of the workplace; make professional contacts; explore a new organization; explore a new industry; earn money; and receive a full time job offer.51

- Encourage your Congressperson to sponsor or support legislation that increases protections of interns.
  ■ Why? Interns are not protected by the same federal laws that prohibit job discrimination in its varying forms. This includes labor laws regarding hours worked, sexual harassment, working environment, individuals with disabilities, workplace injury, whistle-blower protection, and discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or age.52

- Support organizations like the B.A. Rudolph Foundation that provide scholarships to underrepresented populations.
  ■ Why? Since its founding in 2011, the B.A. Rudolph Foundation has supported 38 young women as they launched their professional career by providing scholarships, mentoring, and networking opportunities.53 In addition, every dollar donated to the Foundation goes directly to fund scholarships.

---

48 See footnote 7
49 See footnote 23
50 See footnote 25
51 See footnote 7
52 See footnote 23
53 Number accurate as of November 2016.
We conclude with a call to everyone to join our efforts in leveling the internship playing field. Until all internships are paid and incentivize all young people, including women, ethnic minorities, and lower economic classes to participate, additional support must be provided to individuals who would not be able to participate in an internship due to financial constraints.

Since our founding in 2011, we have supported 38 women launching their professional careers by providing scholarships, mentoring, and networking opportunities.\textsuperscript{54} We hope to support even more women in the future but can only do that with your help. From serving as a mentor to making a donation, there are a variety of ways you can contribute. If you are interested in any of the programs listed below or have questions, please email info@BARudolphFoundation.org.

With your help, we can provide scholarships to more women who have secured an unpaid or underpaid internship, and who otherwise would not be able to afford such an opportunity. For them, a small amount of support could make a significant difference in starting their career and would help in leveling the playing field of internships in the U.S.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time Commitment:</strong> 5 Minutes, anytime!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duties:</strong> Go to our website, click Donate, and enter your gift! (Remember, it’s also tax deductible)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Impact:</strong> Every donated dollar goes directly to a scholarship, not our operating costs. Everything helps: just $75 covers Metro fare for one month, and $1,500 funds one scholar for...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time Commitment:</strong> ~4 Hours, May-August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duties:</strong> One in-person meeting and checking in by phone about every other week. Providing vital professional guidance and networking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Impact:</strong> Helping a scholar navigate their new field and make important career decisions is one of the most important and impactful ways to support our women. They’ll carry your wisdom with them for life. Do you remember your mentor? We thought so.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{54} Number accurate as of November 2016.
## CONCLUSION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ambassador</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time Commitment:</strong> ~3 Hours, January-March; September-November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duties:</strong> Approximately three phone calls or emails a year, plus minimal follow-up, with information about our work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Impact:</strong> The more colleges and organizations that know about us, the more women have access to our support!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Host an Outing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time Commitment:</strong> 1-3 hours, May-August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duties:</strong> Take the scholars on a tour or outing of your choice in Washington. Previous trips include the White House, Pentagon, Capitol, and Washington Nationals baseball games.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Impact:</strong> A unique and memorable Washington experience for the scholars and an opportunity for you to get to know them!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee Member, Pathways to Public Service Host Committee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time Commitment:</strong> 2-4 hours, October-November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duties:</strong> We host an annual Pathways to Public Service event in November. Each committee member invites at least five friends and colleagues to attend the event and asks them to consider contributing to the Foundation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Impact:</strong> Increase engagement of our current supporters, introduce the Foundation to new potential supporters, and help us reach our annual fundraising goal to directly fund our scholarship programs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee Member, Application Review Committee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time Commitment:</strong> ~18 hours, mostly over a two-week period during March and/or April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duties:</strong> Participate in a 1 hour orientation, independently evaluate applications for one of the three internship scholarships, and discuss top applicants in a 1-2 hour selection meeting (held in-person or via conference call).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Impact:</strong> Help select future scholarship recipients!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>