

# Developing a Sustainable, Student-Directed, Paid Internship Program: One College's Story

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# Introductions

Did you have an internship as a student that affected your future career?



# Achieve at Highline College

- Community College in Des Moines, WA, 15 miles south of Seattle
- First inclusive post-secondary transition program in Washington state
- 1 or 2 year certificate
- Primarily transition age, school district funded students
- Campus, Classroom, Career
- Partners with Highline's Community and Employment Services teams to support student to find a job after graduation



## Why individualized internships?

- Individualized internships mimic the performance expectations and accountability of competitive paid employment.
- Students are not limited by anyone's expectations of them
- Students have choice and take the lead in developing their own career goal
- Part of efforts to dismantle a deficit based system



## Why paid internships?

- Paid internships serve the dual purpose of earning money while preparing for desired future careers.
- Research shows that paid employment during school is associated with improved employment and earnings later in life (Sum, Khatiwada, and Trubsky 2014)
- Access to paid work experience is a normal part of college for our students' typically developing peers



# Engaging Employers

## Outreach/Site Development

- Often begins with an internet search
- Provide an overview of the program
- Explain the type of support they can expect from the program
- Explain expectations of an internship site
- Outline the role of a job coach
- Discuss a specific intern role, be willing to help develop one if needed



# Engaging Employers

## Internship Support

- Discuss the support plan
- Check in with the employer regularly

## Follow up

- Thank them for participating as an internship site
- Provide the opportunity to give feedback
- Confirm commitment to host interns in the future



# Internship Sites

**Frequent Industries:** Elder care, Elementary School Special Education, Restaurant, Childcare, Retail, Art, Agriculture, Clerical

**Off Campus:** Aegis of Kent, All Points Yarn, Al's Music, Movies, and Games, Arbor Village, Arcaro Boxing, Artsy Fartsy Art Lessons, Bombsheller, Camelot Elementary School, Children's Therapy Center, CitySoil Farm, High Point Village, Kent Valley Ice Centre, Kline Galland Home, Meadow Crest Early Learning Center, Museum of Flight, Northwest Center Kids, Park Orchard Elementary, SuperSix, USGS, Benson Vision Source, W&O Supply, Watertown Hotel, Rove Vintage, Premier Computers, Westside Seattle News, Maaco, Regal Cinemas, Pie Lab

**On Campus:** Print Shop, Career and Student Employment Center, Bookstore, Multimedia Design Department, Public Safety, Media Production



# Sustainability of Internship Program

DVR partnered with Highline's Community and Employment Services to fund "Future Launch" as a 2-year Pre-ETS pilot project in 2016 to work with high school students, consisting of 3 phases:

- School-based Job Clubs
  - Summer Career Readiness Academy
  - Summer Internships
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- Pre-ETS eligibility expanded to include post-secondary students in year 2 of Future Launch – opening the program to ACHIEVE students



# Sustainability of Internship Program

## Goals:

- Increased support for students to access campus resources
- All 2-year ACHIEVE students to have individualized, integrated, paid internships while in college

## Structure:

- “Job Clubs” integrated into Advising Seminar course work in Fall and Winter quarters for first year students
- Quarter-long, 75 hour internships in Winter or Spring quarter for first year students
- Students begin connecting with DVR the summer after their first year to start CBAs in Fall quarter of their second year
- Staffing:
  - Transition Career Specialist
    - Coordinates site development/retention and internship job coaching support
  - Achieve Advisors
    - provide job coaching support, as needed



# Engaging Students

## Pre-Internship:

- Initial Career Plans
  - Discuss career interests and goals from a person-centered planning perspective
  - Set specific, measurable goals for industry, hours, location, and specific skills to be learned
- Placement
  - Ensure informed choice on student's part
  - Ensure internship site matches student interest and skill set
  - Interviews
  - Students are paid through Highline's HR department



# Engaging Students

## During Internship:

- Job Coaching Support
  - Don't over support!
  - Establish clear expectations of what support looks like
  - Frontload support
- Practicum Seminar
  - Employer Evaluations
  - Asking for a reference
  - Creating/Updating Resumes
  - Self Evaluation



## Stephen's Internship

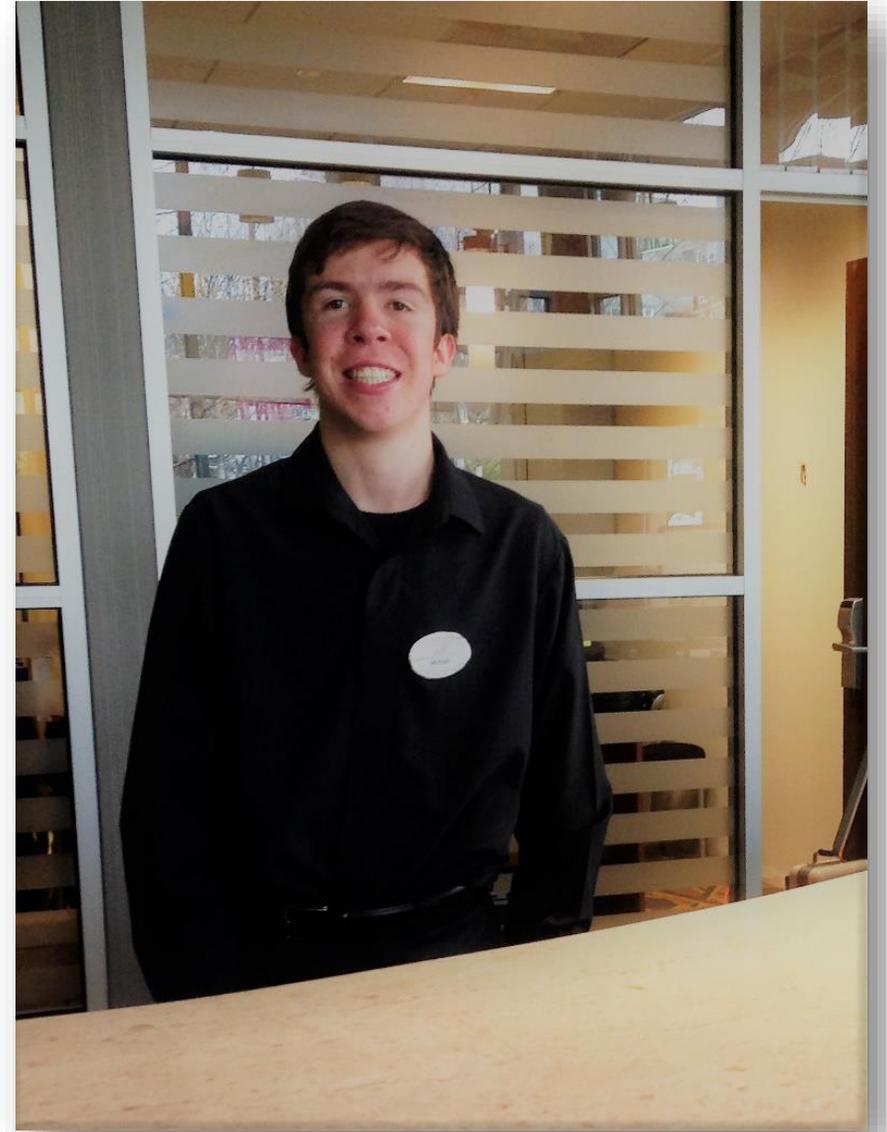
- What do you remember from your initial career plan?
- What was your interview like?
- What did you do for your internship each week?
- What are 3 things you learned from your internship?
- How did your internship effect your long term career goal?







Watertown Hotel, a  
Pineapple Hotel  
Front Desk Assistant



# Bombsheller Sewing Assistant



## Roshawana

“Working with Roshawana was an amazing experience for our team, and our overall company morale. She was always joyful, and happy to learn. She asked deep, impactful questions that reinvigorated our team and introduced each of us to a new side of our jobs and the company. Roshawana started her internship not knowing much about fashion manufacturing, but by the end she had designed, printed, and helped sew up her very own pairs of leggings. She has already started to market them online to her followers. We were so sad to have her go, but have high hopes for her future in fashion.” - Jazzlyn Stone, Bombsheller



# How Students are prepared for job search with adult employment services

Resume

References

Real World Experience

Some students change their career goal

Empowered to be their own advocate in their job search



Gabriel

Internship at CitySoil Farm

Employed 40 hours a week at  
Cascade Management as a  
Groundskeeper for \$14/hour



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Thank you!

# Highline College logos



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