



SUPERVISOR HANDBOOK

West Sacramento Home Run Summer Internship Program

Home Run Internship Program Background

In 2016 the West Sacramento City Council referred *Measure E* to voters to authorize a 0.25 percent sales tax to fund general city services, including those aimed at improving educational and career opportunities for youth. The measure was approved by voters 66% to 34%. In December of 2018 the City Council approved plans for the West Sacramento Home Run, funded by *Measure E* revenues, which brought together existing and new programs aimed at helping families prepare their children for school, college and careers.

The City of West Sacramento began sponsoring a paid summer internship program in 2017, placing 24 interns with 4 local employers. In 2023, with the help of the West Sacramento Chamber of Commerce, 56 interns were placed with 18 employers across West Sacramento and Sacramento.

The Home Run internship program provides a valuable work-based learning opportunity for West Sacramento youth. One goal of the program is to create a pipeline of future talent to meet the needs of local employers and strengthen West Sacramento's economy. Another is to help local youth understand that there are opportunities for professional success right here in West Sacramento.

Internship Objectives

The objectives of the Home Run summer internship program are:

- Provide West Sacramento youth with real-world work experience with a local business, agency or nonprofit organization.
- Help West Sacramento youth improve their work-readiness skills, clarify their career interests and grow their professional networks.

- Connect local employers with future members of the local workforce.

Intern Training and Development

Home Run interns are required to attend paid weekly training at City Hall. Training will emphasize the “durable skills” described in *Appendix A*.

Supervisors should conduct a performance review with each intern at the end of the first four weeks and again at the end of the internship. Performance reviews, which will focus on these same competencies, will be used to award digital badges.

A schedule of weekly training sessions and topics is provided in *Appendix B: Important Dates*.

Employer Commitment

Participation in the Home Run internship program is open to any business, public sector agency or nonprofit entity. Participating employers must commit to providing:

- A safe, supportive work environment for interns.
- An adult supervisor to mentor interns, approve time sheets, conduct performance reviews and serve as the primary contact for Home Run staff.
- A minimum of 20 hours of work per week.
- Meaningful work assignments for interns that allow them to learn about your industry, your organization and the skills needed for professional success.

Detailed supervisor expectations may be found in *Appendix C: Supervisor Expectations*.

Student Eligibility Requirements

The internship program is open to students in the Washington Unified School District who are at least 16 years old by the first day of work and have a recommendation from a teacher or

counselor. Students are River City High School must also have completed at least one course in a Career Technical Education pathway.

Intern Recruitment

Employers wishing to participate in the internship program should submit an intern request form to the Home Run team by Wednesday, April 3. Applications will be accepted from students April 8-24.

An online intern request form is available at <https://www.wshomerun.org/intern-request>.

Intern Selection and Hiring

Students may apply for up to five internship positions. The Home Run team will confirm applicants' minimum qualifications before forwarding applications to the supervisor.

Interviews take place the week of May 6-10. Please be flexible in scheduling interviews, as students are in school most of the day.

Employers decide who to interview and hire. You are not required to interview all applicants, but we encourage you to do so to give them the opportunity to practice interviewing. Also please keep in mind that at this point in students' professional development, their enthusiasm for the opportunity is more important than their skillset.

In past years the willingness of so many local employers to offer internships has meant that not all available slots were filled. If you do not receive any applications, or your preferred candidates decline your offer and you still wish to host an intern, please notify the Home Run team and we will try to help.

Human Resources and Payroll

Interns are paid the 2024 California Minimum Wage of \$16 per hour.¹ The Community College Foundation (TCCF) acts as the employer of record and manages onboarding, payroll and human resources for the Home Run, including providing liability and workers compensation insurance for the program.

Interns must submit timesheets twice per month, and supervisors are expected to review those timesheets. More information will be provided at the supervisor orientation on June 5th.

Providing a Quality Internship Experience

The Learning Plan and SMART Goals

An internship is a learning experience. The Home Run team provides interns with an orientation and weekly training, but students who apply for this program are seeking work experience, and the bulk of their learning takes place at the work site.

As such, we require participating employers to identify learning goals for their interns, to evaluate their skills, and to provide actionable feedback. In other words:

- Describe what you want your intern to learn.
- Assess their progress toward those learning goals.
- Provide clear suggestions for improvement.

The intern request form includes a section to include the learning outcomes you have for your interns. For help identifying learning goals, you may wish to consult *Appendix D: Learning Goals*. The Home Run team will also provide one-on-one consultations to prospective

¹ Four interns will be selected to assist the Home Run team during the weekly training sessions. These interns will be paid \$17 per hour.

supervisors wishing to have help identifying learning goals and developing a learning plan. A Learning Plan Worksheet will be provided at the supervisor orientation on June 5th.

Interns, like other employees, have their own goals. Therefore, we also ask supervisors to help their interns identify 2-3 SMART Goals, and to provide the support the interns need to achieve these goals. Further information and a SMART Goals template will be provided at the supervisor orientation on June 5th.

Variety of Experiences

Home Run interns usually spend most of their time within one department or team. But an intern can gain a greater understanding of your operations and your industry by being exposed to different departments and jobs. Consider rotating the intern through multiple departments or teams, having the intern shadow a few different employees for a day or two, inviting the intern to sit in on meetings, or other ways the intern can learn about a variety of possible career paths.

Project-Based Learning

Many people learn best by doing. For this reason, we require that employers assign at least one project that the intern can complete during the internship, that can be included in the intern's portfolio. Projects generally require some thought and planning, take more time to complete than day-to-day tasks, and result in a product or event. Examples include reports or newsletter articles, presentations, web pages or publications, etc. Projects may be completed independently or with a coworker or supervisor.

Informational Interviews

The Home Run team has found that informational interviews provide a great way for interns to learn more about what it takes to be successful in a given career or industry. They can also help interns understand that there are many paths to success. For this reason, we require

that supervisors provide the time and opportunity for interns to conduct two informational interviews. Interns may interview their supervisor or other employees, or even customers or partners. The Home Run team will provide interns with guidance on planning and conducting informational interviews.

Supervisor and Employee Buy-In

Finally, it is important to have buy-in from the employees who will be working alongside the intern. Do not assign a supervisor without first consulting the supervisor. (Yes, this has happened!) Make sure your employees are willing and able to assist and mentor the intern when needed.

Behavioral or Performance Issues

As a supervisor, you have probably dealt with employee behavioral or performance issues. A brief conversation with the employee is usually sufficient to correct the problem. We recommend this same approach with interns, being very clear about why the behavior is problematic for your team and/or organization.

If an intern repeatedly demonstrates problem behaviors or performance issues, even after receiving warnings, please contact the Home Run team. PLEASE DO NOT FIRE AN INTERN! If disciplinary action is needed, including termination, the Home Run team will handle it.

Staff Contact Information

Please don't hesitate to contact Home Run staff with questions, suggestions or any internship-related problems. We are here to help!

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Thank you!

The Home Run internship program depends on the participation of local employers. We understand that mentoring a young person takes time and effort that could be spent on your operation. On behalf of the City of West Sacramento, the West Sacramento Chamber of Commerce and Washington Unified School District, thank you for your support of West Sacramento youth!

Appendix A

Durable Skills, the Learning Plan, Performance Reviews & Digital Badges

Durable Skills

Home Run intern training focuses on “durable skills,” the social, emotional and cognitive skills needed for success in higher education and virtually any career. The Home Run team aligns our training with the durable skills identified by MHA Labs², which are divided into six “building blocks”:

Personal Mindset	Verbal Communication
Planning for Success	Collaboration
Social Awareness	Problem Solving

The Learning Plan

Supervisors should meet with each intern to develop a learning plan. You can begin with a list of the skills or knowledge you want the intern to gain, and identify the tasks, projects and experiences that will help achieve these learning objectives. Be sure to share your plan with the intern and ask what they are hoping to learn too. The learning plan should support one or more of the durable skills above. More information and a Learning Plan Worksheet will be provided at the supervisor orientation on June 5th.

Performance Reviews

Supervisors should complete a performance review form twice for each intern—once in the fourth week of the internship and again in the second-to-last week. A fillable PDF form can be found on the Home Run website here: <https://www.wshomerun.org/skills-assessment>. The form contains rubrics for each of the 35 skills that make up the six building blocks. Interns will receive a copy of this form and will understand that these are the competencies on which they will be evaluated.

We do not expect you to ensure that interns improve every one of these skills. But we encourage you to provide opportunities for interns to practice and strengthen these skills whenever possible.

Digital Badges

Digital badges are an online version of a credential that indicates that the holder has accomplished something or demonstrated certain knowledge or skills. Interns will be able to earn a digital badge if a supervisor rates them at least “Capable” for *all* of the skills associated with one of the building blocks.

It is possible that an intern could complete an internship without earning a digital badge. But supervisors must agree to provide the *opportunity* to earn at least one. The intern request form includes a section in which you can explain how you will provide this opportunity.

² For more information about the MHA Labs Building Blocks, see <https://mhalabs.org/skill-building-blocks/>.

Appendix B

Important Dates

A complete calendar with Zoom links can be found on the Home Run internship web page:
<https://www.wshomerun.org/internships>.

Date	Time	Event
March 12	11:00 AM to noon, via Zoom	Supervisor Information Session (All supervisors should attend, as there are new procedures this year.)
April 3	5:00 PM	Employer deadline to submit internship descriptions
April 8-24		Application window for students
May 6-10		Interviews
May 17	5:00 PM	Internship placements finalized
June 5	11:00 AM to noon, via Zoom	Supervisor orientation
June 10	10:00 AM to 3:00 PM	Intern onboarding and training
	12:00 to 1:00 PM	Intern-supervisor luncheon
June 11		First day of work
August 2	12:30 to 2:00 PM	End-of-summer luncheon
		Last day of work

Appendix C

Supervisor Expectations

Home Run internship supervisors are expected to provide each intern with:

- A safe and supportive environment in which to work and learn.
- At least 20 hours of work per week. If you cannot meet this expectation, consider partnering with another department within your organization or with another organization.
- Opportunities to ask questions.
- The opportunity to complete at least one project that will serve as an example of the intern's work and can be included in an online portfolio.
- The opportunity to earn at least one Home Run digital badge by demonstrating important "Building Block" skills. (See Appendix H for information about digital badges.)
- Time for the intern to conduct two informational interviews with you and/or other employees or executives.

Appendix D
Learning Goals
(next page)

INTERNSHIPS: Learning goals

AN INTENTIONAL FOCUS ON STUDENT LEARNING is what distinguishes internships from jobs. Interns should be considered learners first and contributors second, regardless of whether they are earning credit associated with their internship. Below are some tips to help you facilitate intern learning through the use of learning goals.

IMPORTANCE

Co-creating learning goals with interns:

- > Signals that you **care** about their experience, which can increase their commitment, productivity, and desire to stay long-term
- > Helps ensure everybody is on the **same page**, resulting in a better experience for all
- > **Models** professional goal-setting, action-planning, and accountability
- > Most importantly, helps set the stage for **maximum intern learning**

FOCUS AREAS

Goals can focus on different areas:

- > **Skill** development
- > **Knowledge** acquisition
- > **Personal/professional** development

SMART GOALS

Effective goals share some commonalities:

- > **S** - Specific
- > **M** - Measurable
- > **A** - Action-oriented
- > **R** - Relevant
- > **T** - Time-oriented

Example SMART goals:

- > By the middle of my internship, I will be able to **write a 1-pg press release** using AP style
- > By July 30th, I will be able to **troubleshoot Microsoft Excel questions** with 97% accuracy
- > By week 5, I will be able to **identify 3 career paths** in this field & **1 way to learn** about each

TIPS

Goal-setting caveats:

- > Try to **avoid** broad goals like “understand” or “learn” because they cannot be easily measured
- > **Two or three** goals is typically sufficient for a quarter-long internship
- > Writing SMART goals may require several feedback and **revision loops**

PROCESS

Goal-setting is a process:

- > **Before an intern starts**, encourage them to think of a few potential learning goals
- > During the **first week**, schedule an hour with your intern to flesh out their goals in writing
- > Set up a **weekly** or **biweekly** time to check in
- > **After a few weeks**, meet with your intern about how they are progressing towards their goals, what action plan they have in place to achieve them, and how they might want to modify their original goals
- > At the **end of the internship**, review progress towards stated learning goals as part of a formal performance evaluation meeting

SMART GOAL PROMPTS:

- > What do you **specifically** hope to accomplish?
- > How will you **measure** your progress towards this goal?
- > What **actions** will you take to achieve this goal?
- > How is this goal **relevant** to your internship, academic interests, &/or career aspirations?
- > What is your **timeline** for meeting this goal?

Appendix E

Top Ten Concerns of Interns³

1. Give Us Real Work!

It cannot be said too many times that interns want to work and learn. An intern can help you with projects and assignments that might not get accomplished otherwise. If you have brought on an intern as a recruitment tool, how will you be able to assess their abilities? It just makes sense to utilize your interns well.

2. Do What You Say and Say What you Do!

Be honest with your interns about what they can expect during their internships. If the job will require stuffing some envelopes, then make that clear. But if you tell the intern they will be researching a project, and they spend 90% of their time doing “grunt work,” bad feelings may develop. Honesty does not cost you anything, and it will make the interns feel that much more respected.

3. We Like Feedback!

Remember that interns are students, and they may not have the business skills, experience and workplace behaviors that you take for granted. If your intern makes a mistake, use this as a “teaching moment” and pull him or her aside and explain how the situation should be handled in the future.

4. We Want to be Included Too!

Is there a staff meeting that they can attend? Can they quietly tag along to that next project meeting? Headed to lunch with a couple of people in the office? Please include them in the daily life of your workplace. After all, if you provide a little more perspective on the intern’s work, the product will be much better.

5. Please Explain.

When you assign work, make sure you give a detailed explanation. While the work may seem trivial and obvious to you, it may not be obvious to someone who has never done it before. Patience and a few extra minutes at the beginning will pay off later when your intern can produce good work independently.

6. I Want a Mentor!

Make sure that interns have mentors or supervisors to provide guidance. Identify those who truly like to teach and train, and the experience will be even better.

7. A Minute of Your Time Please.

The best mentor in the world is useless if he or she cannot or will not spend the necessary time mentoring. As newcomers, interns may not speak up if they are feeling ignored, so the burden of making sure they are okay is on the mentor. If the busiest person in the office wants to be the designated mentor, he or she should schedule regular times to meet with the intern.

8. Be Prepared!

That wonderful day has arrived, and the intern begins his/her internship only to learn that no one knew they were coming, and there is no place for them to work. Make sure employees are ready to welcome the intern and help them get up to speed.

9. Um...I Need a Chair.

It is amazing how many employers hire an intern and do not think about the fact that they will need a desk, chair, phone and computer to perform assigned tasks. It is no fun, and not efficient to move an intern from desk to desk as people are out one day to the next. If you want to get a job done, you need to supply the intern with the tools to do the job.

10. Show Me the Money (As Best You Can).

While each internship is different, and each industry has its own personality, remember that interns have expenses. Your organization may not be in a position to pay much, but anything can help. Maybe you can help pay for the intern’s parking, take them to lunch every so often, or develop some other creative way to assist them.

³ Adapted from *An Employers Guide to Building a Quality Internship: How to Create a Youth-Friendly Workplace*, Sacramento Employment and Training Agency (ND).