



GUIDE FOR INTERNSHIP HOSTS

The Capstone Project of the
Digital Safari Career Exploration Program

DIGITAL SAFARI ACADEMY

A California Partnership Academy - Multimedia



**"REDEFINING SCHOOL,
REDEFINING COOL SINCE 1996!"**

© Mt. Diablo High School, Concord, CA

OVERVIEW OF THE SENIOR INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Help Our Students Help YOU!

The Digital Safari Academy @ Mt. Diablo High School in Concord, CA (DSA) is a three year college and career program beginning in the sophomore year of high school. DSA integrates multimedia design with the core curriculum through project-based learning. The Academy has won over a dozen statewide awards for web design and design excellence. As part of our Career Explorations Program, each of our 12th grade students is expected to complete an internship with a cooperating host company.



DSA has been selected as one of two academies in the nation to participate in the Career Academies Project - a pilot program to develop models for increasing student exposure to careers and career paths through enhanced interaction with businesses and employers. The Career Academies Research Project is funded by the U.S. Department of Education.

What's an Internship?

Internships are critically important for young people as they prepare for life after high school. An internship that provides a rich learning environment sends an important message to students: learning and earning are intrinsically related. We're looking for media-oriented internships for our students ... graphic design, web design, audio/video production, desktop publishing, content development, project support, etc.

Our students need real-world work experience. Our students are the future and we need your help to prepare them to be their best! The goals of our summer internship program are to promote students' interest in post-secondary education, and to develop the skills that are required to be successful in the 21st century workplace. You'll be helping our students AND helping your business by tapping into this excellent source of energetic young talent!

An internship is:

- Hands-on Learning - Internships combine hands-on learning and skills development with real-world work experience under the guidance and supervision of supportive adults.
- Project-based - Internships are project-based and should result in a tangible benefit to your business that the student intern can be proud of
- A Fair Exchange - An internship is a work/learn exchange between a student and your business
- Student Commitment - 4 to 6 hours per day, Monday through Thursday, mid-June through July

About This Booklet

This booklet is an introduction to the Digital Safari Career Academies Senior Internship Program. We hope it will help you provide meaningful work experiences for our talented and enthusiastic students. We invite your participation and we thank you for your support. We also have a variety of useful information and resources for internship hosts and students on our website at www.digitalsafari.org/careers.

Sections

- I. The Senior Internship Program**
- II. Career Academy Skills for Success**
- III. Your Role in Internships**
- IV. Establishing SMART Goals**
- V. The Legal Stuff**
- VI. About the Digital Safari Academy**
- VII. Contact Information**
- Appendix: Sample Internship Agreement**

I. THE SENIOR INTERNSHIP

A 6-Week Summer Work Experience

The Senior Internship is an experience during the summer after the junior year or during senior year when a student spends an extended period of time working with and learning from an adult in a local business or not-for-profit organization.

The essential ingredients of the program are:

- The student makes a formal application and completes an informational interview to qualify for the internship.
- An Internship Agreement is signed by both the student and the Internship Supervisor and a Consent Form is signed by a family member.
- The student participates in the weekly Internship Seminar, which includes research, reflection, writing, problem-solving, presentations, and portfolio development.
- Rigorous and challenging learning goals are specified, monitored and assessed on an on-going basis.
- The internship culminates in a product or demonstration of learning that is evaluated by the internship supervisor and the school's seminar leader.
- An internship ends with an exit interview and a celebration of learning.



An Integration of Work and Learning

The integration of work and learning is a basic feature of the Senior Internship Program and it has two goals:

- 1) To promote students' interest in post- secondary education, and
- 2) To develop the skills that are required to be successful in the 21st century workplace.

These goals are mutually enhancing.

We know that people learn best when they are learning to meet a concrete need, see a reason for learning and can immediately apply their learning in a useful way. A meaningful internship helps students learn not just "to know" but also "to do."

The Senior Internship Program integrates performing useful work at a local company or organization with related learning during a weekly Internship Seminar. The Seminar teacher uses information about the worksites to stimulate interest in academic skills, problem-solving, positive work attitudes and larger community issues. Interns build reading, writing and math skills while they solve real problems at the worksite; they practice communication skills when they have a reason to speak and to listen.

Even tedious tasks make sense if teens see that they are developing skills that have a value beyond the tasks themselves. As our students plan for college and other post-secondary options, a successful internship helps them understand the need for continuous learning.

What Teens Need to Succeed: Workplace "Know-How"

For today's teens to be successful both in college and in the world of work, they need a solid foundation in basic literacy, thinking, and communication skills, as well as the personal qualities that demonstrate the ability to be reliable and trustworthy.

Structured and documented real world experiences, such as Internships, are among the most effective strategies to teach and reinforce these skills. When students work with and learn from employees in their local communities, their motivation and learning increases.

II. CAREER ACADEMY SKILLS FOR SUCCESS

21st Century Skills

The Career Academy Skills for Success listed below are based on the nationally respected Partnership for 21st Century Skills. They reflect what business and education leaders agree are critical for success as citizens and workers in the 21st Century.



CREATIVE AND CRITICAL THINKING

- Solve problems and make decisions
- Think creatively
- Learn through research
- Reflect and evaluate

COMMUNICATION

- Write clearly
- Speak distinctly
- Listen carefully
- Observe effectively

COLLABORATION AND TEAMWORK

- Cooperate with others
- Give and receive feedback
- Negotiate challenges and resolve conflicts
- Plan and prioritize to reach a goal

MEDIA and TECHNOLOGY

- Use new and emerging technology
- Use responsible behavior regarding technology (“digital citizenship”)

PERSONAL QUALITIES

- Manage time effectively
- Demonstrate appropriate behavior and attire
- Recognize and respond appropriately to workplace challenges
- Show initiative and work independently
- Be reliable and dependable

Adapted from 21st Century Skills for Success, www.21stcenturyskills.org

III. YOUR ROLE IN INTERNSHIPS

A. Before the Internship

A-1. Establish a learning project

We want our students to be both working for you and learning from you. As part of the planning process, the school's Internship Coordinator will help you design a project that the intern can undertake-- a project that is worthwhile for you and that is a rigorous learning experience for the student.

A-2. Sign an agreement

You will sign an Internship Agreement that specifies the responsibilities of all parties and outlines the position description, work hours and the learning project.

A-3. Interview the student

Before a student is placed with you, they will meet with you at your company. These "interviews" are designed as get-to-know-you sessions and as a way for both you and the student to make sure that the match is a good one. Students may bring sample resumes, along with prepared questions. During this interview, we suggest that you provide information about the following:

- The organization's purpose and activities
- Your job duties, tasks and responsibilities
- What you want the intern to do
- Other employees who may be working with the intern
- Where the intern will work

B. During the Internship

B-1. Provide orientation

The sooner the student understands what the organization does and how it operates, the sooner he/she can assume assigned responsibilities and be productive. To help make that happen, you should make your co-workers aware of the arrival of your intern and plan an orientation session. The orientation might include:

- A tour of the facilities
- An introduction to other employees
- Reading materials about the organization
- Introduction to the intern's workspace
- Explanation of company policies, e.g. attire, behavior, cell phone and e-mail do's and don'ts, etc.
- Explanation of work standards and procedures

B-2. Supervise the Intern

As an Internship Supervisor, you will use all the skills that apply to any effective supervisory relationship: motivating, modeling, communicating, delegating, training, coaching, and evaluating. The intern will look to you as a mentor who will assist in making the transition from high school to post-secondary education and work environments.

Your intern will ask you to sign weekly time sheets. Additionally, we expect that you will meet with your intern regularly to provide feedback concerning their performance. During these meetings, the student can: report on the status of their work, ask questions, learn how they are contributing to the organization, consider why the work needs to be done and who benefits from it, participate in periodic assessment of their strengths and areas needing improvement and get a sense of work that lies ahead.



B-3. Support student research and reflection

Interns will have a Research and Reflection Log in which they write regularly. Each week they will have an assignment that requires them to speak with you and/or co-workers about a specific topic. We ask that you provide time each week for interns to speak to their colleagues, talk to you, and record what they learn in their Log.

B-4. Support student participation in the weekly Internship Seminar

All interns are enrolled in an Internship Seminar that meets weekly. The seminar curriculum includes structured lessons that address the workplace skills described in this booklet. The seminar engages the interns in research, problem-solving and critical thinking related to their work projects. Student work hours will need to accommodate the seminar schedule.

C. After the Internship

C-1. Conduct exit interview and evaluate intern

At the end of the internship, we will ask you to evaluate the internship experience. Forms will be provided for both you and the student to use. This is a critical part of the learning experience when conducted professionally and sensitively. We encourage you to meet with your intern to review the performance evaluations.



C-2. Write letter of reference

Your intern will ask you to write a letter of reference at the end of the program. One copy should be given to the student and one copy sent to the Internship Coordinator. These letters will become an important piece of their senior portfolio.

C-3. Attend the final celebrations

At the end of the summer internship period, we will host an event to celebrate and recognize the interns' accomplishments. You will receive an invitation to join us. While your participation is optional, we encourage you to attend.

IV. ESTABLISHING SMART GOALS

Setting Goals for Your Student Intern

Goal setting is a very powerful technique that can yield strong returns when working with interns. At its simplest level the process of setting goals allows the supervisor to choose work assignments/activities for the intern. By knowing precisely what you want to achieve, you can discuss the goal with the intern so he/she knows what to concentrate on. Goal setting provides long-term vision and short-term motivation. By setting sharp, clearly defined goals, you can measure them and the intern can take pride in the achievement of those goals.



Goals for an internship project should be: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Related to your values and Time bound – SMART.

Below are items to go over at the beginning of a student internship project.

SMART Goals

Specific

- What specific task is the student to complete during the internship?

Measurable

- What are the outcomes that will define when the project is done?
- How will progress be measured along the way?

Achievable

- Review the internship project goal - is this goal realistic?
- Will the intern have enough time, resources and support to achieve the project goal?
- Are there any other steps the intern should take to assure success?

Related

- How is the project related to your values and those of your organization?
- Is the project worthy of the intern's time and effort and will it make a positive contribution to your organization and to the intern?

Time Bound

- Provide the intern will clear timelines and milestones to keep him/her on track and a final deadline for the project deliverable(s).

V. THE LEGAL STUFF

Overview

During a properly structured off-campus work experience, a student is neither an “employee” nor an “independent contractor.” As an intern, a student is allowed to work without compensation in exchange for academic credit. Students who successfully complete an internship through the DSA’s internship program will receive academic credit. The internship host (you), the student and the Academy’s Internship Coordinator will sign an Internship Agreement that documents key aspects of the internship and the relationships between all parties to assure compliance with applicable laws and labor regulations.

A. Liability and Workers Compensation

- DSA students participating in unpaid internships will be covered for liabilities by the Mt. Diablo Unified School District.
- Workers compensation coverage for DSA students participating in unpaid internships will be provided by the Mt. Diablo Unified School District.

B. Intern Safety & Personal Risk

- You are responsible for informing students of any potential personal health or safety risks that may be inherent in the internship.
- The District does not provide medical, health or accident insurance for students participating in off-campus experience based learning activities. Students are advised to carry an adequate health insurance policy on their own.

C. Labor Compliance

- Students participating in unpaid internships will qualify for class credit.
- Students will be participating under the supervision of the Academy’s Internship Coordinator and with the approval of the Mt. Diablo Unified School District.
- Because an internship is not a job, students are not required to hold a work permit.

VI. ABOUT THE ACADEMY

Career Focus: Multimedia

Over their three years in the Academy, students work on a series of academic and multimedia projects completed using industry standard multimedia tools. Through the completion of these projects, students work towards mastery of skills in graphic design, desktop publishing, animation, interactive authoring, photography, sound and video production, 3D design and presentation software.



Teaching 21st Century Business Skills

Additionally, the nature of the project-based-learning environment gives students a variety of experiences in planning, management of people and resources, working with clients and meeting deadlines while they learn to be confident, self-sufficient, and creative problem solvers – all important job skills for the economy of the 21st century. Our project design methodology has been adapted by numerous programs around the country, and our annual Innovation Project is a model for the involvement of the business community in the day to day management of classroom projects.

VII. CONTACT INFORMATION

DIGITAL SAFARI ACADEMY

Randy Depew, Lead Instructor

Mt. Diablo High School

2450 Grant Street

Concord, VA 94520

925-682-4030 ext. 3417



INTERNSHIP COORDINATOR

Mark Westwind

925-372-8486

mark@digitalsafari.org

www.digitalsafari.org/careers

MT. DIABLO HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

Dr. Cheryl LeBeouf

925-682-4030 ext. 3400



The Career Academies Project is developing models for strengthening work-based learning through career exploration visits and internships, along with classroom-based workshops. Funded by the U.S. Department of Education, this is a joint project of **MDRC** and **Bloom Associates, Inc.**