

Internships offer work experience

Senior Kiki Stewart doesn't play sports or start her homework after school. Instead she heads downtown to City Hall to file paperwork for San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom.

"It taught me to be self-sufficient," said Stewart. "I got experience so that when I apply for real jobs they'd want to hire me and I'd know what to do."

An internship is a full or part-time work experience in a field of study, typically according to the applicant's interest. Internship positions are available in businesses, nonprofit groups, law firms and other organizations or companies.

Internships can take place during the academic year or over the summer, although summer internships can often be more competitive, according to Claudia Leotaud, Admissions Counselor at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles.

"Students feel it'd be more convenient to work as summer interns," said Leotaud. "During the academic year they're balancing their studies with their extracurriculars."

Finding an opportunity for an internship may be challenging according to Amanda Coffee ('04), who has just applied for an internship at the San Francisco Zoo.

"Most students get internships through their college or university," said Coffee. "Since I attend school in Los Angeles, it was up to me to seek out the opportunities in San Francisco."

To apply for these internships, the applicant needs to send her resumé and a cover letter. The cover letter explains why she qualifies for the position. Often employers have a pre-determined view of what their interns should be, said Coffee.

"Many want graduate students, previous work experience in their field or a certain major," said Coffee. "The San Francisco Zoo only asks for biology or education majors for their child care program. I'm a communications major, but I love children and took AP Biology with Mr. Cinti.

Hopefully, the zoo staff sees that I am a qualified candidate, although I don't fit their description."

Internships can enhance college applications and help students

decide their major due to applied skill, according to Leotaud.

"Internships help students understand what major they may be getting into," said Leotaud. "Most students pick their major based on what sounds interesting to them."

An internship can also reflect a student's motivation.

"It shows that students are taking the initiative to increase their knowledge in certain areas that they're interested in," said Director of College Counseling Rebecca Wandro. "Colleges like to see hands-on experiences outside of the classroom."

With the work experience gained, interns set themselves above peers and have additional points to talk about during interviews.

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— Kiki Stewart



Ji Ni Chung | special to the broadview

7 steps for getting an internship

1. Plan Ahead

Start looking in February for summer internships, August for fall internships and October for winter internships.

2. Write a resume and cover letter to showcase your skills

Highlight your talents, extracurricular activities and sports, but still tailor your resume for each internship to which you are applying.

3. Know your audience

Be familiar with the company you are applying to. Express an understanding of a company's products, services, key personnel and recent news.

4. Use correct spelling and grammar

Check spelling and grammar and have at least two qualified people review your work.

5. Have reference letters prepared

Have a good reference letter from a professor, advisor or employer. Obtain references as soon as possible and prepare them for distribution to potential employers.

6. Be clear about your availability

If you are applying for an internship outside of the area in which you are attending school and/or reside, let the employer know in your cover letter that you will be relocating to his area for the internship period.

7. Network

Use friends, family and school contacts to find out about possible internships.

Source: <http://www.internjobs.com>

A quick guide to filing taxes

1 It is not necessary to file taxes if you are dependent on a parent or if your income is less than \$5,000 per year.

2 If you make less than \$5,000 per year, file a tax return if you have federal or state withholding so you can get money back.

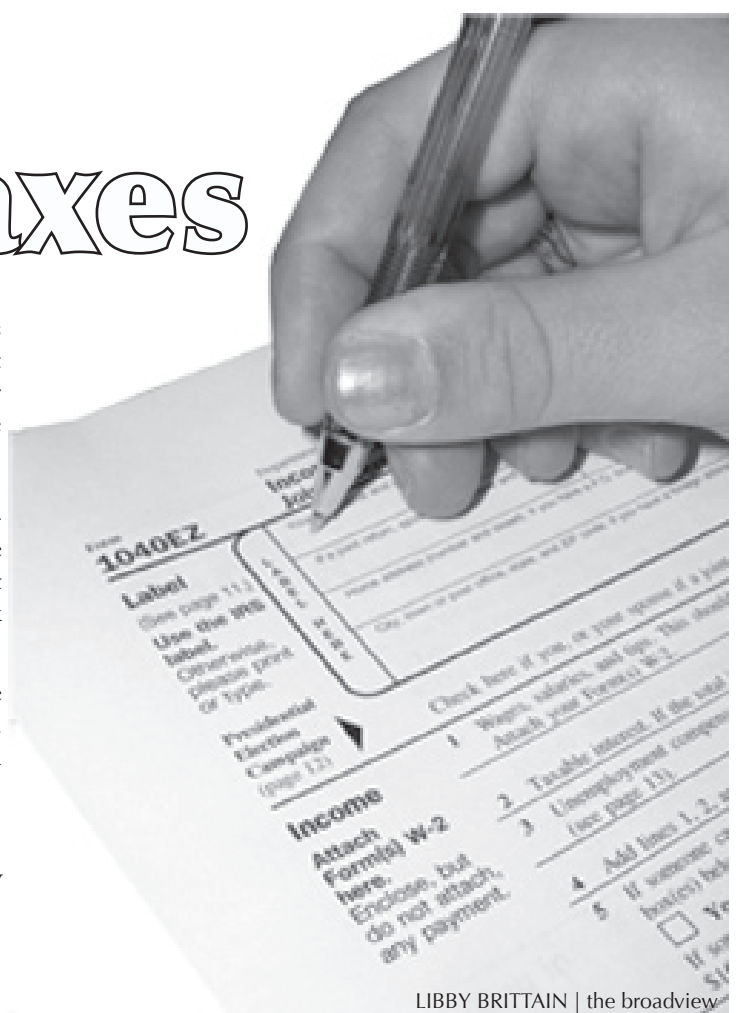
3 If you are a dependent and have unearned income (i.e. interest on a savings account) over \$800, earned income (i.e. job earnings) over \$5,000 per year, substantial deductions or self-employment net income more than \$400, you should probably use Form 1040.

4 Employers fill out Form W-2 showing total wages paid to you during the preceding year. To fill out the 1040 or 1040EZ forms, you must have your W-2 form. By law, your employer must have the W-2 form to you by the last day of January.

5 You can also file your taxes online using Internal Revenue Service's (IRS) *e-file*. This service allows you to file your tax returns for free. Visit <http://www.irs.gov/> and click the Free File link to be sure you qualify.

6 You also may sign up for direct deposit to have your refund put directly into your bank account. According to the IRS, it is faster, more secure and more convenient.

7 Taxes returns must be filed and payment made by April 15, unless you file for an extension.



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