Summer 2017 Internship Student Panel for Parents

The Summer Internship Panel takes place each year during Family Weekend. Student panelists are asked to reflect on their internship and provide information that is useful to both students and parents in preparing for a successful internship search and experience.

College of Engineering (Carnegie Institute of Technology)
- American Association for the Advancement of Science (Engineering & Public Policy)
- CIA (Chemical Engineering and Engineering & Public Policy)
- Merck & Co., Inc. and Credit Suisse (Chemical Engineering)
- Ekso Bionics (Mechanical Engineering)

College of Fine Arts
- Roundabout Theatre Company (Dramaturgy)

Dietrich College of Humanities and Social Sciences
- Deloitte (Economics and Statistics)
- Yelp (Information Systems)

Mellon College of Science
- Apple (Physics)

School of Computer Science
- Apple (Computer Science)

Tepper School of Business
- Deutsche Bank (Business Administration)
- IBM (Business Administration)
- Einhorn Media Group (Business Administration)
Deutsche Bank Internship
Major: Business Administration

Description: “It was a sales and trading internship and I rotated on International Equity Sales and Commercial Real Estate Trading. I largely shadowed all of the salespeople and traders and was given occasional projects such as synthesizing stock research and working on excel models. I also had a final 4-person end-of-semester group project.”

How did you find your internship?
“DB recruits from CMU and comes to campus and I had been going to their info sessions since freshman year.”

When did you begin your internship and how many internships have you applied for?
“My internship was from the first week of June for 8 weeks. I applied to 5 banks for sales and trading last year.”

What role, if any, did networking play in acquiring your internship?
“It played a 100% role in me getting the internship. I had been going to their events since freshman year and visited the trading floor twice before my interview.”

How did this internship influence your outlook on your future?
“It confirmed that I wanted to do sales and trading as a career.”

Looking back, is there anything you wish you had done differently?
“While I'm extremely happy with DB, I was unaware of all of the opportunities available to sophomores and wish I would've spoken to more upperclassmen or done more research to learn of all of the ones available.”

What advice or tips do you have for parents with students engaging in an internship or full time job search?
“Relax, everything will be ok. If your student is motivated (which evidenced by them getting into CMU is likely true) then they will be fine. Make sure they make use of the resources available to them like the CPDC and get acclimated with the services early on while classes aren't too much of a burden.”

Is there anything else that you think is important for parents to know that we have not covered this discussion?
“Soft skills are incredibly important and one could argue that they are just as important as the technical skills. All students will have the technical ability but employers want to ensure they are bringing someone enthusiastic, team oriented, and has leadership qualities into the company.”
IBM Internship
Major: Business Administration

Description: “I worked in the Performance & Programmatic Marketing program as a paid intern. I was in charge of developing a new end-to-end digital marketing strategy for their events team. I have an offer to return to them full-time after I graduate as a member of their paid media team. It was a sales and trading internship and I rotated on International Equity Sales and Commercial Real Estate Trading. I largely shadowed all of the salespeople and traders and was given occasional projects such as synthesizing stock research and working on excel models. I also had a final 4-person end-of-semester group project.”

How did you find your internship?
“Through Handshake.”

When did you begin your internship and how many internships have you applied for?
I had applied to about 10 internships before then, but they weren't through Handshake.”

What role, if any, did networking play in acquiring your internship?
“I had other friends who interned there in the past, and they were pivotal in helping me prepare for my interview and explaining to me what the program would be like. I made an effort to speak with a lot of IBM staff across different departments, and I think it helped me a lot in landing my offer on a different team.”

How did this internship influence your outlook on your future?
“It gave me a lot more confidence in my skills as a marketer, and gave me a better sense of different career paths I could take and what my day-to-day life would look like in different roles.”

Looking back, is there anything you wish you had done differently?
“Not really. I feel like I could have applied to more positions, or done more networking prior to the application process.

What advice or tips do you have for parents with students engaging in an internship or full time job search?
“Listen to your child and be open to their exploration of different career paths than the one you might expect. If you give them too much pressure, they might not react in the way you're hoping. Show them that you support them from a distance, and check in to see how they're doing in a constructive way. The hardest part for students is just making time to work on applications, and generating the motivation to aim for the companies they want, so you can give them guidance if they ask for it.”

Is there anything else that you think is important for parents to know that we have not covered this discussion?
“This is really a journey for your own child to explore. However, as a parent, you can do your own research and see if you have any connections that could help them get an internship (especially if they're a freshman or sophomore, it's relatively hard to find internships on their own). I always appreciate it when my dad forwards me articles with interview tips or career advice, but he doesn't do it in a way that creates more stress for me, which is very important.”
**Einhorn Media Group Internship**
Major: Business Administration

**Description:** “I interned for Einhorn Media Group, a creative design agency in Pittsburgh, over the summer, and was able to utilize my campus resources while working full-time. It was a low-payment internship, but the knowledge and skills that I was able to gain from it are priceless. The Dozzi scholarship aided me a lot in funding my internship ventures.”

**How did you find your internship?**

“Through Networking.”

**When did you begin your internship and how many internships have you applied for?**

“I started in June. I have applied to many for next summer.”

**What role, if any, did networking play in acquiring your internship?**

“Networking played a huge role in my internship and during it. I networked through CMU resources (the International Film Festival) to find contacts, whom I then emailed for opportunities.”

**How did this internship influence your outlook on your future?**

“It made me realize that there is more to business than banking and that I have a huge passion for digital marketing and sales.”

**Looking back, is there anything you wish you had done differently?**

“Nope!”

**What advice or tips do you have for parents with students engaging in an internship or full time job search?**

“Let your child pursue internship positions that they are passionate about, but be of guidance and assistance when you find that they're struggling. Finding internships is already stressful enough for students, so they don't particularly need the pressure from parents if it is unnecessary.”

**Is there anything else that you think is important for parents to know that we have not covered this discussion?**

“Parents should encourage their children to pursue internships that THEY (the children) want, not internships that their parents want them to take on.”
Apple Internship
Major: Computer Science and Physics

Description: “Sensing Hardware Optical Engineering Summer Internship. Designed and tested experimental optical systems for Apple Watch. Paid internship at Apple Infinite Loop Campus in Cupertino, CA.”

How did you find your internship?
“Attended on campus info session held by Apple in the fall where they collected resumes. Was contacted a few months later about interviewing.”

When did you begin your internship and how many internships have you applied for?
“May 22, 2017. I did not apply for any internships last academic year as this offer came before I would have started applying. The year before I applied to ~10 internships before getting an offer at MIT Lincoln Labs. The year before that I applied to ~5 and did not get any offers, but found an internship through family connections.”

What role, if any, did networking play in acquiring your internship?
“Apple provided lots opportunities for networking and meeting people across teams, although the best connections were the ones I developed within the time I was on.”

How did this internship influence your outlook on your future?
“It solidified my decision to go to graduate school but also to take an extra semester to actually get an additional major.”

Looking back, is there anything you wish you had done differently?
“The two years I was applying to internships I wish I had started earlier in getting recommendations and writing essays.”

What advice or tips do you have for parents with students engaging in an internship or full time job search?
“Learn how to work independently. This means honestly trying to figure out the issues you run into throughout the internship yourself and carefully thinking through them and double checking yourself before going to your mentor/supervisor/manager or someone else to ask for help. This makes a big difference in the impression you make on those around you and ultimately what kind of recommendation they will have for you.”

Is there anything else that you think is important for parents to know that we have not covered this discussion?
“Experience (and positive recommendations from those experiences) is the biggest differentiation between candidates.”
American Association for the Advancement of Science Internship
Major: Chemical Engineering and Engineering & Public Policy)

*Student completed Internships with AAAS and CIA.

Description: “AAAS was a paid, part-time internship where I was able to learn about what the organization does and conduct a lot of informational interviews with staff across the organization.”

How did you find your internship?
“I met a professor at the end of my freshman spring semester who offered to mentor me. He gave me a lot of contacts in the DC area associated with CMU and I spent the first half of the summer reaching out to them until I finally found this opportunity.”

When did you begin your internship and how many internships have you applied for?
“July 2015. I've applied for dozens of internships.”

What role, if any, did networking play in acquiring your internship?
“I would not have gotten my first internship after freshman year without networking. My professor's network with the school played a huge role in finding my first job, which helped me find my second.”

How did this internship influence your outlook on your future?
“It showed me what I like and don't like to do and I learned about what options are available for me. I didn't know that as a chemical engineer I could have prospects at an NGO and an intelligence agency.”

Looking back, is there anything you wish you had done differently?
“I wish I had started networking sooner so I could have spared myself the uncertainty of the first half of my first summer off.”

What advice or tips do you have for parents with students engaging in an internship or full time job search?
“Network, go to the CPDC's events, practice going to career fairs, know that there are many more options for the summer beyond internships.”

Is there anything else that you think is important for parents to know that we have not covered this discussion?
“There are lots and lots of opportunities here, it's just a matter of knowing where to find them. The connections and networks at this school are so extensive and impressive.”
CIA Internship
Major: Chemical Engineering and Engineering & Public Policy

*Student completed internships with CIA and AAAS.

Description: “CIA was a full time, paid internship where I worked on science and technology problems to support the overall mission.”

How did you find your internship?
“I applied online by suggestion of a family friend.”

When did you begin your internship and how many internships have you applied for?

What role, if any, did networking play in acquiring your internship?
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**Merck & Co., Inc. Co-op**
Major: Chemical Engineering

*Student completed internships with Credit Suisse and Merck & Co., Inc.

**Description:** Both of my internships were paid. My internship with Credit Suisse was in NYC HQ where I was working as a Technology Analyst - I was able to get this internship at the TOC after a recruiter came up to me while I was working on the TOC planning committee to talk about the company. My other one was a 10 month co-op with Merck & Co, Inc. in NJ working in Environmental Sustainability - since it was a long internship, I was able to work on long-term projects, travel to other sites, and engage with various divisions.”

**How did you find your internship?**

“Through the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers & the TOC.”

**When did you begin your internship and how many internships have you applied for?**

“July, September and I had applied to around 5 internships”

**What role, if any, did networking play in acquiring your internship?**

“Networking was crucial in both. Having no tech experience, networking helped me build relationships with the recruiters so that I could show them through my work/roles that I would be capable of working in a tech setting. Co-ops are usually only 6 months, but by networking with a recruiter and talking to them I was able to extend the co-op and adjust it to what I wanted to learn.”

**How did this internship influence your outlook on your future?**

Both internships helped me understand what kind of work environment I thrive in and definitely understand both my strengths and weaknesses. I also got to work in two areas that are totally different from a typical ChemE job, which opens up a lot of options for what I'd like to do in the future”

**Looking back, is there anything you wish you had done differently?**

“As a freshman, I wish I had done just a little more in the career fair prep/internship searching because I was definitely more timid at that point, and I just wish I knew what I know now which is not to be afraid to take advantage of opportunities and try new things.”

**What advice or tips do you have for parents with students engaging in an internship or full time job search?**

“Network - with professors, peers, recruiters, anyone. I don't think you should necessarily always expect something out of a conversation, but it's important to build relationships with different types of people because that's how you are able to find help with school, jobs, opportunities, or just for advice in general.”
Ekso Bionics Internship  
Major: Mechanical Engineering

**Description:** “I worked on robots that help spinal cord injury and stroke survivors accelerate their progress from wheelchair to walking. As a paid intern on the medical team, I designed human-machine interfaces on the exoskeletons and performed usability research for clinical operations. I was able to branch out and work with the product management and marketing teams as well, where I derived and analyzed usage data to inform future product decisions, and created interactive walkthroughs of the rehab devices for marketing content.”

**How did you find your internship?**

“Having followed the company for a long time, I found an opportunity to apply through LinkedIn.”

**When did you begin your internship and how many internships have you applied for?**

“I began this internship in July and finished it late August. I consider myself lucky to have gotten an internship that I would consider a "top choice", however this is far and away not the only position I have applied for. In my time at CMU, I have probably thrown out an application to 75+ companies, and networked with more than double that.”

**What role, if any, did networking play in acquiring your internship?**

“Networking, in my opinion, was the sole reason I got the internship. The position was only for current graduate students, aka those already done with a 4 year undergrad (I was the only undergraduate student offered a position at the company). What got me the time-of-day was the fact that two of the original founders of the company and its technology were CMU alums. During my interviews, I could tell that the CMU brand held a lot of weight within the company, and was able to leverage this affiliation to better sell myself as a potential employee. Upon getting in contact with one of the principal engineers who was a CMU alum, it was easy to find common ground and keep a dialogue going, which eventually led to a great internship.”

**How did this internship influence your outlook on your future?**

“One quote from my mentor summarizes this well: ‘For the longest time, the challenge was to build the best robot that we could. For the first time ever, the challenge is to build the best robot that will sell.’ Coming from academia and research, I overlooked the challenges that transitioning to a business setting can provide. Rather than playing with donor money and just trying to publish for the sake of advancement, there is a new aspect where you are also trying to be a cash flow positive company. Seeing this shift significantly impacted my perspective on where I can have an impact on the field that I love; I plan on using my next summer to further explore the product marketing and business development sides of a medical device company.”

**Looking back, is there anything you wish you had done differently?**

“I wish that I would have been pickier earlier. It's important to keep your options open, but I knew from the get-go that I only wanted to work in medical device companies. I wish that I had saved myself the time and trouble of applying places that I had no intention of working at, and put more time and energy networking with companies that I truly did have an interest in.”
What advice or tips do you have for parents with students engaging in an internship or full time job search?

“Students, lean on your parents when possible. Use them as a sanity check when you are applying to companies, juggling offers, or down-right lost and don't know what to do. If one or more of your parents are working professionals, leverage their network and use their experiences to better yourself!

Parents, know your child. My mother and father are my sounding boards; I keep them in the loop of where I am applying and who I am networking with, and they help keep me grounded on my goals. Develop a sense of what your children want out of their careers and life, and serve as an invested third party to help guide them on the right paths.”

Is there anything else that you think is important for parents to know that we have not covered this discussion?

“The earlier you start, the more doors open.”
Deloitte Internship
Major: Economics and Statistics

Description: “Paid internships at Deloitte and MasterCard where I networked, did control-risk testing, and accounts management.”

How did you find your internship?
“Handshake, info sessions, and on-campus recruitment sessions.”

What role, if any, did networking play in acquiring your internship?
“Networking was the biggest reason I got my internship. I went to every info session and talked to all the recruiters several times throughout the recruitment process.”

How did this internship influence your outlook on your future?
“I definitely want to do consulting, at least for a few years. It definitely made me more open to different industries and career paths.”

Looking back, is there anything you wish you had done differently?
“I wish I understood more the differences between certain roles before applying for them.”

What advice or tips do you have for parents with students engaging in an internship or full time job search?
“Don't put too much pressure on the students. Opportunities come and go, it's just about looking for them in the right places.”
Yelp Internship
Major: Information Systems

**Description:** “I worked at Yelp as a Product Management Intern (paid) from May to August 2017. Collaborating closely with amazing engineers and designers, I drove the product roadmap for Yelp's Messaging feature. This included defining user needs, identifying product-market fit, designing user interfaces, and measuring success of new improvements.”

**How did you find your internship?**
“Online.”

**How many internships have you applied for?**
“Applied to 4 companies.”

**What role, if any, did networking play in acquiring your internship?**
Networking played an extremely pivotal role until I got to my first round of interviews.”

**How did this internship influence your outlook on your future?**
“I'm even more confident about my intent grow as a Product Manager and Technology Entrepreneur in interesting consumer markets.”

**Looking back, is there anything you wish you had done differently?**
“I would’ve focused more on side projects and interview prep, and less on taking one hard class after another.”

**What advice or tips do you have for parents with students engaging in an internship or full time job search?**
“Start networking early on, build relationships with alumni, and develop meaningful differentiators to help stand out among the crowd.”

**Is there anything else that you think is important for parents to know that we have not covered this discussion?**
“It's okay not to have everything figured out from Day 1. Most students succeed when they have the opportunity to explore different career paths during their internships and then finally lock down on one choice when they recruit for full time positions.”
Roundabout Theatre Company Internship
Major: Dramaturgy

**Description:** “I was the paid Artistic Intern at Roundabout Theatre Company in New York City. I coordinated Roundabout's Script Reading program, served as point person for Tony Voter ticketing, and assisted with the coordination and execution of Opening Nights. I also assisted with the organization and execution of play readings and workshops, read and wrote coverage on new plays and readings, and wrote content for Education @ Roundabout's Upstage Guides.”

**How did you find your internship?**
“I knew about the company already, but found the internship on their website.”

**When did you begin your internship and how many internships have you applied for?**
“I began my internship on May 30. This cycle, I applied for six internships.”

**What role, if any, did networking play in acquiring your internship?**
“I was able to connect with an alum who is a prominent literary agent, who connected me with a dramaturgy alum who worked for Roundabout, and put in a good word for me. Another dramaturgy alum still works at Roundabout.”

**How did this internship influence your outlook on your future?**
“I know for sure I want to work in new play development and literary management, but this internship showed me that I have an interest in artistic administration and management, as well as that I would love to work in New York theatre (which is very different from regional theatre).”

**Looking back, is there anything you wish you had done differently?**
“I wish I had asked to be in the room more during our developmental readings and workshops.”

**What advice or tips do you have for parents with students engaging in an internship or full time job search?**
“Help them out if they need anything, honestly make sure they are meeting deadlines, but don't stress them out necessarily, especially if they work in a field different from yours.”

**Is there anything else that you think is important for parents to know that we have not covered this discussion?**
“If your student's field of work is vastly different from yours, don't try to place your framework of industry knowledge onto theirs--trust that they know what they're doing.”