

## INTERNSHIPS

# Who Will You Be This Summer?

By [LISA BELKIN](#)

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And if you haven't applied for yours yet, you are late.

“Internships are no longer optional, they're required,” says Peter Vogt, author of “Career Wisdom for College Students” and an adviser to [MonsterTrak.com](#), the student arm of the job-search Web site, which reports that 78 percent of students in college this year plan to complete one or more internships before entering the post-collegiate world.

First, let's clarify terms. An internship is not the same as a part-time job. What parents of today's students did during their summers — working as camp counselors, shipping room clerks, lifeguards — those were jobs. Jobs are for making money. Internships are for gathering contacts, résumé fodder and experience. Jobs are found through human resource departments. Internships are handled at a much higher level. In a true internship, real responsibility provides a hands-on feel for what a particular kind of work is like (and not the kind high school students do, volunteering at soup kitchens or building huts in Guatemala — that's community service).

The time for securing internships is already running short. The career counseling center at Southern Methodist University in Dallas warns students on its Web site that recruitment for the most coveted 10 percent of internships starts 10 months in advance. And many of those, at places like Microsoft, Google, Disney and XM Radio, have filled their summer slots by New Year's Day.

For those programs with deadlines that are a bit more forgiving (say, April 1, when, according to Southern Methodist's data, 40 percent of official programs close), the question is how to find them.

College career offices keep lists of the big programs, and the most popular ones are very popular. Last year, for instance, Google received more than 5,000 applications for fewer than 1,000 summer intern slots in the United States.

Even small entities are awash in applications. The [American Jewish Committee](#) received 200 for about a dozen spots last summer, while the National Superconducting Cyclotron Laboratory at [Michigan State University](#) had 20 science majors, from the likes of Johns Hopkins, Cornell and the University of California, San Diego, eager to earn \$12 an hour in the single available position of "science writing intern." At the Huron Consulting Group, a young Chicago company formed in the aftermath of the Arthur Andersen debacle, application numbers had been rising so steadily in recent years that it increased its program from 20 to 72 interns last summer.

Competition is further heightened because applicants are increasingly qualified. At Ketchum, a New York public relations company, more than 600 students applied for 16 positions last summer, with predictable results.

"This year, for the first time, every candidate selected for this summer's program came to Ketchum with previous internship experience under their belt," says Allison Slotnick, a spokeswoman. "Where once strong academics and extracurricular activities could demonstrate one's capabilities, a track record of professional internship experience is now necessary."

In other words, you need to have done an internship to qualify for one. What is an average student who has spent summers working as a grocery cashier to do?

There is almost always a side door — a makeshift slot created for a particularly qualified, determined or connected applicant. That’s where parents, acquaintances, alumni networks and local business owners and politicians can come in handy.

Professionally, Victoria Goldman is author of three books, including “The Manhattan Family Guide to Private Schools.” In her spare time, she helps friends and family find otherwise hidden internships.

Her husband, Lloyd, runs a real estate business, so when a friend of her son’s wanted to learn the business, “Lloyd found him something, I think in the file room, but now he really knows real estate from the bottom up.” When their daughter expressed interest in law, Ms. Goldman called an assistant district attorney in the Bronx who served with her on the same charitable board. The result was a one-month internship taking notes in court and helping with research on the [Bernard B. Kerik](#) corruption case.

In all, Ms. Goldman helped 10 college students find internships last summer alone.

Students who don’t have a Ms. Goldman in their circle might take a closer look at whom they do have.

“Personal connections, family connections,” says Hilary Dykes, a sophomore at the Wharton School at the [University of Pennsylvania](#), to describe what it takes. “Most people want to say it’s not, but it really is.”

Ms. Dykes spent last summer at a financial services firm in Greenwich, Conn., in an “unofficial internship” procured through a friend of her family’s. She prefers not to name the company because she doesn’t want to share her contacts.

She attended business conferences, learned to analyze a stock portfolio, helped research a PowerPoint presentation — nothing of any key importance to the company, but she got a taste of the field.

“I was very lucky to have it, especially coming from Wharton,” she says, “because students are so competitive about internships. If you can get one that’s a name on your résumé, that’s a huge deal.” Each internship “gives you an edge,” she says, because the next summer position will require more experience.

Erik Tillman, now a sophomore at Williams College, has spent the last few summers working in a cardiac research lab at [Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center](#) in Manhattan. His work there was mostly entering and analyzing computer data on the function of mouse hearts. He found the job, while still in high school, because the scientist who runs the lab was a family friend.

At first reluctant to let his father intervene, Mr. Tillman quickly decided that he should use any route he could to get in the door. “Then I had to prove myself on my own,” he says. He did, and was asked back for subsequent summers and was included as an author on a medical journal article that included some of his data.

Time was when most internships lacked this kind of substance. Gen Y is changing that. The generation already known for its impatience has made it clear — in numerous studies and polls — that it will not stoop to fetching and copying.

Ryan Healy, the 23-year-old founder of Employee Evolution, a Web site that gives career advice to Gen Yers, speaks for many of his age when he says: “I walked away from one internship because it was a waste of my time. We have limits.” Members of his generation, he explains, have been building their résumés almost since grade school and are too qualified to be doing “meaningless work.”

In response, prestigious companies seeking to recruit the most qualified interns are offering elaborate support programs, training and actual work.

At General Motors, for instance, 18 would-be designers spent last summer designing a car. They were divided into teams for the G.M.

Design Annual Summer Internship Program and sent off to build a three-dimensional model for the vehicle's exterior and create sketches for the interior. They also developed press kits, videos and a Web site for their proposed brand.

At Texas Instruments, last summer's interns worked on new products with company engineers. They tagged along on customer visits and had roundtable discussions with senior company executives, including the chief operating officer.

IN fact, a good number of internships serve as two-month-long job interviews, and just as the students hope to turn the experience into something good for the résumé, the companies hope to turn the students into future employees.

“We tell them up front that we have offered, and will offer, full-time jobs to outstanding performers,” says Maureen Lippe, a founder of Lippe Taylor Brand Communications, a Manhattan firm that specializes in marketing to women. “So they come in with a very competitive mind set.”

Microsoft, which brings up to 1,000 interns to its Redmond, Wash., campus each summer, hires about half of them full time, according to Caroline Bulmer, the company's internship program manager. “Our interns provide us with an opportunity to develop the next generation of talent,” she says.

The word “internship” has often been synonymous with “working for free.” But recently, as summer programs have come to be viewed as a way to reel in the best and the brightest, companies are sweetening the pot with weekly stipends. Ms. Bulmer says that interns last summer at Microsoft not only received “competitive pay,” which varied by position, but also were provided with subsidized rental cars, a bike purchase plan, health club memberships, bus passes, discounts on company software and a summer of parties and special events.

At the same time, a growing subset of internships are available only to students who cannot afford to work for free. (To find a list of these, start with your college's financial aid office.)

Leigh Stuckey, a Duke junior, won such an internship last summer at the Archives of American Art at the [Smithsonian Institution](#). "It was specifically for students who qualified for financial aid," she says. Ms. Stuckey spent 10 weeks reviewing the oral histories of artists who had been interviewed during the 1960s and '70s, readying the transcripts for eventual release to researchers. She was paid \$4,000 (\$5,000 is budgeted for next summer). The other Smithsonian interns receive college credit for their work but are unpaid.

For most students, an internship still means draining someone's bank account (the students' or the parents') in exchange for a résumé line.

Which leads to the subject of my own intern.

I hired one, Allie Sommer, for the first time last summer. Allie is the daughter of a close friend, and since I have known her for most of her life, I knew she was smart and resourceful and more organized than I was. She had waited tables the summer before, but now that her freshman year at Duke was over, she was looking for something with a little more substance.

I tried to give her as much "real" work as I could, though her main assignment for July — finding an electronic calendar system that would keep me from forgetting appointments — while of great importance to me, was probably not as earth shattering to her. Closer to the "substantive" end of the spectrum, she did a number of interviews for me and wrote up memos on them. Her final project, in fact, was to help report this article.

Also, I paid my intern, \$10 an hour. But I was not able to give her more than 10 hours a week, so she had to supplement that by taking a second internship — with a friend, also a writer, who was looking for a

researcher. And when that wasn't enough, she sold clothes at a nearby store.

For this summer, she says, she is starting to look earlier.

That's a good plan, advises Ms. Goldman. The young man she helped place in her husband's real estate office has already put out feelers, this time through formal intern programs at top investment banks. Although he thought real estate was interesting, he now thinks he would like to be a banker. "Those are cutthroat internships to get," she says. "Of course, if you happen to be related to one of the firm's partners. . . ."

*Lisa Belkin writes the Life's Work column for the Thursday Styles section of The Times. Allie Sommer contributed reporting.*

## **RESUME CRITIQUE**

### **FORMAT**

Easy to scan?

Document has consistent fonts, caps, spacing, etc.?

Format choice (reverse chronological or functional) matches applicant's background and career goals?

Are appropriate areas emphasized first - job experience or education?

Is the length of the document comparable to the person's education level?

### **CONTENT**

Is the document relevant, specific, concise in its wording?

Does the resume include quantitative information, if appropriate?

Are the accomplishments that are listed linked to the organizational goals?

Does the second page include the applicant's name?

Is the person's email address professional?

Is there extraneous information?

Is the person's experience equal to the position?

Is the resume aged appropriately?

### **STYLE**

Appropriate use of action verbs?

Consistent use of tense?

Consistent writing?

Correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling?

Correct use of abbreviations?

Sentences are a readable length?

## **INTERVIEW CRITIQUE**

### **APPEARANCE**

Appropriate to the interview situation?

Balanced use of jewelry?

Use of perfume/cologne?

Appropriate stance/body language?

Firm/dry handshake?

Appropriate eye contact?

Distracting nervous habit(s)?

Timeliness?

### **ANSWERS**

Prepared a 30 second "elevator" speech about self?

Appropriate to the question?

Engaged in a dialogue - prepared questions for interviewer?

Familiar with the institution/organization?

Familiar with the position?

Able to address/respond to illegal questions?

### **CLOSURE**

Thank you letter sent in timely manner

## BOOKS

# On Double Secret Probation

By [CHARLES McGRATH](#)

ONE of the oddest features of American university life is the stubborn persistence of Greeks on campus. Not the classical Greeks, but the only occasionally toga-clad brothers and sisters of fraternities and sororities, with their rushing and pledging, their hazing, their bonding, their ritual chugging and barfing.

At a time when most universities are tireless proponents of openness and diversity, fraternities and sororities are engines of sameness and conformity. In practice, most are racially segregated and stratified by class and income as well. You can't get in if you don't look and dress just like all the other brothers and sisters.

Very little has changed, in fact, since the early '60s, the setting of what Chris Miller calls his "mostly lucid" memoir, "The Real Animal House," just out in paperback with a newly appended glossary of such key '60s details as madras and the Isley Brothers.

Mr. Miller, who was one of the writers of the movie "Animal House," was a member of Dartmouth's legendary Alpha Delta Phi, the inspiration for the film, and he here recounts the more-or-less true story of what it was like to be back there pounding brews with Flounder, Dumptruck, Otter and a guy named Moses, whose specialty was setting fire to his pubic hair. The book is a lot like the movie, only grosser, with much more spillage of bodily fluids, and like the movie, it's a tasteless, guilty pleasure. You find yourself laughing out loud even as you ought to be shaking your head in disapproval.

What redeems "The Real Animal House" is the beery glow of nostalgia. All this happened 40 years ago, we're reminded, before Dartmouth went co-ed and back when the Adelpians could be forgiven for not knowing any better. Their behavior is boorish but mostly harmless, and the few women who turn up in the book are saintly creatures who not only put

up with it all but are sweetly obliging in the bedroom or backseat, as the case may be.

NOW, of course, we do know better — or know enough to recognize that the Greek system, like college itself, only more so, does not always foster wholesome relations between the sexes. A classic, though hardly entertaining, text here is Peggy Reeves Sanday's "Fraternity Gang Rape: Sex, Brotherhood and Privilege on Campus," now in its second edition, with a new introduction and afterword. Originally published in 1990, the book is an analysis of a gang rape that took place a couple of years earlier in a frat at the [University of Pennsylvania](#), and it wheels out a lot of heavy academic artillery. Freud and Lacan are summoned, for example, to prove what one would have thought was pretty obvious: that rape is "phallogentric." We also hear about the Mundurucu, the bad frat boys, so to speak, of the South American rain forest.

But the book convincingly suggests that gang rape is not an isolated occurrence on frat house row — one Penn student estimated that it happened there several times a month — and that there really is a weird sexual subtext to a lot of fraternity rituals and behavior. In fact, a great many of the brothers, trying so hard to be studly, show all the signs of "confused sexual identity."

There is no discussion of gang rape in Alexandra Robbins's "Pledged: The Secret Life of Sororities," also just out in paperback. But date rape by fraternity members is so commonplace that the young women she writes about take it for granted. Ms. Robbins has an annoying, overcooked prose style, and when the book came out in hardcover, it was criticized in some quarters as being under-researched. Denied official access by all the sororities she approached, Ms. Robbins went undercover at a place she calls State University and mostly confined her reporting to four sorority sisters, two juniors and two sophomores, who agreed to let her hang around with them if she disguised their identities.

Not a huge sample, but even so, Ms. Robbins's conclusions are hard to quarrel with. She documents, in sometimes numbing detail, a system

that is even more puzzling than the fraternal one: cattier, meaner, more rigid and structured (with an exhausting number of required meetings and rituals), more obsessed with wardrobe and dieting. While the guys are all pumping iron, it turns out, the girls are purging themselves. At one Texas sorority, Ms. Robbins reports, the plumber has to come once a month to unclog the pipes.

And yet, while fraternity brothers typically underperform academically — racking up worse G.P.A.'s than the rest of the student body — the sisters overperform, and usually do better. Most of them don't want careers, however, and instead dream of being stay-at-home moms.

These are some of the many contradictions noted in Alan D. DeSantis's newly published "Inside Greek U.: Fraternities, Sororities and the Pursuit of Pleasure, Power and Prestige," which also demonstrates that the Greek system is a powerful upholder of the double standard: virginity (or the myth of it, anyway) for girls, promiscuity for guys, with sexual abuse the inevitable consequence. Mr. DeSantis is also an academic, who can't resist elaborating on "performativity theory," for example. But his book is nevertheless a clear and mostly readable overview that winds up with the surprising conclusion that fraternities and sororities aren't so bad after all.

The reader of any of these books may wind up wondering, however, why on earth students would want to put themselves to the misery and expense of joining such a club. The answer, of course, is camaraderie, a sense of belonging. Fraternities and sororities are families of a sort, and if you think of them that way, they're perhaps not so different, in all their contradictions, from the families that students leave back home. Except that everyone drinks a lot more. If you eliminated alcohol from Greek life, most of the bad behavior would vanish instantly. But then, without alcohol, nobody would join in the first place.

The good news, to judge from most of these books and especially from Mr. Miller's — which, like the movie, concludes with a section describing the subsequent lives of his fellow Adelpians — is that Greekness is not

a permanent condition. If they don't die of cirrhosis first, most brothers and sisters grow up, get married, have jobs, raise families. Some even wind up in the White House.

*Charles McGrath, the former Book Review editor, is a writer at large at The Times.*